Plan R: Reform (Revenge)
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僕のヒーローアカデミア | Boku no Hero Academia | My Hero Academia

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Character:
Midoriya Izuku, Aizawa Shouta | Eraserhead, Yamada Hizashi | Present Mic, Nezu, Midoriya Inko, Tsukauchi Naomasa, Yagi Toshinori | All Might, Dabi | Todoroki Touya, Toga Himiko, Bakugou Katsuki

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Lex's Favorite BNHA Fics ٩(●˙▿˙●)۶, Smart™ Izuku, Izuku's Dads, Dadzawa Vibes, the perfect fic doesn't exi-, Alternative Universes of

Fandoms I enjoy., A Picky Vest's Favorites, Hainako's Collection of amazing fanfiction, Got 99 problems but these ain't one, Suggested Good Reads, Histórias topzinhas, Banco Fic, Fics that bring me life, Fanfics that Would be Best-Sellers if They Were Published Books, 99NicelyFinishedFics, 1Ids a Bitter's Life Sweetener, Great Fics i Want To Re Read, Purple Archivist: Read and Read Again, BNHA Treasure Box, I will cry about these (bnha), Amazing fics :D, My Fav BNHA Complete Works, My hero academia, my heart is here, will these fics make or break me lets find out, Bnha fanfic who has my heart, Fics I've read so you should too, The Good Fics, hixpatch's all time favorites, The Witch's Woods, A Labyrinth of Fics, Best of MHA, mha fics, *+.｡･*♡The Favoured Ones♡*･｡.+*, Todo lo que puedo llegar a OLVIDAR, Purrsonal Picks, BaNHAmmer, flofli's collection of read mha fics <3, I need a good parental figure [read: Dadzawa] in my life, God-Tier Short Fics and Oneshots, Creative Chaos Discord Recs, Fics_I_would_be_willing_to_sacrifice_my_sleep_to_read_again, □Lux's fav fics□, mha fics that are my will to live, raes unread fics (no specific fandom) woah, rae keeping track of her BNHA fics?!??!? woah, Seul’s Favorite BNHA Fics, Hidden Jewels, Fanfics that I hoard

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Plan R: Reform (Revenge)

by Blueseabird2

Summary

If Aizawa-sensei is right (he is) and Izuku can be a hero without a quirk, then maybe there are a few other people who could also be heroes if given a chance. So Izuku uses his analysis skills and his intern connections (family) to develop Plan R: Reform. Aizawa helps, but is a little busy with Plan R: Revenge. Don't worry, he has his own allies (family) to make sure no one hurts his Problem Child again.

Notes

So. It's time. Thank you to all the (many and amazing) comments on Plan C Meets Plan A, since all your questions about Yagi and Bakugou directly inspired this fic.

I actually had this and drafts of the next few chapters ready weeks ago, but my computer decided it needed a vacation in the land of tech repair. I'm very happy to be back and starting off with the continuation of Consultant Izuku. I hope you enjoy!

Plan R: Reform

Everything started with a notebook. Well, three notebooks. Three notebooks and a drawer that needed a key.

Izuku didn't often think about these notebooks (except when they were all he thought about), only unlocking them and adding a page here or there when it was truly necessary.

For one of the notebooks, it had been necessary quite a bit lately, and the others were being dragged along for the ride. This wasn't a problem, exactly, except that the lock was no longer strong enough to hold them. Not when Izuku needed to make a decision.

Izuku didn't want to make a decision, not really, not when making a decision meant actually trying to control the whirlwinds of ideas and thoughts and emotions that spun in his mind. He was much better at controlling the mutterstorm with Aizawa-sensei's training, but his mentor never judged when Izuku just had so many thoughts that they just needed out.

Izuku couldn't disappoint Aizawa-sensei. He *wouldn't.* If the man needed a decision, then Izuku would decide. He'd decide, even if it meant dealing with the notebooks in the drawer (the thoughts that needed out of his head, yet couldn't be spoken and maybe shouldn't be free).

They'd been on a roof, the evening Aizawa brought Kacchan up in conversation. Not the school roof, never the school roof, but the roof with the overgrown garden where Izuku had left Eraserhead's first present.

Izuku had his back to the tree, rough bark pressing a reminder that he was really Eraserhead's intern into his spine, as both of them drank juice pouches after a lesson about patrol routes.

Eraserhead's gaze had felt like a blanket, heavy and comforting, but also limiting maneuverability as it twined about limbs. Izuku had known that he wouldn't like what the man had to say, but didn't expect his breath to freeze when the hero had sighed and finally spoken.

"We need to talk about the burns."

“What burns?” Izuku asked, momentarily unable to tell if his response had been reflexive or genuine confusion. He’d already been pretty good at avoiding Kacchan before Eraserhead’s training; almost a month in and he was downright excellent. Izuku didn’t think he’d had any burns since the thing with the essay…when the very observant Eraserhead had caught him on a roof. Right.

Izuku opened his mouth again only to close it with a clack when Eraserhead turned red eyes on him. “Kid, I swear, if you say ‘it’s fine,’ I will make you do laps until you collapse.”

This was not an idle threat. Aizawa-sensei had decided that the best way to start handling Izuku’s confidence issues was to make sure Izuku wasn’t at least perpetuating negative self-image out loud (also therapy, but the hero was still letting Izuku pretend he didn’t see that coming). There had been a lot of jumping jacks in the beginning of training.

Eraserhead sighed again, running a hand through messy hair. “Look. I know your schooling sucks and there are many people who make it worse, but I also know that it’s Bakugou who’s the worst, who’s the one responsible for the burns. I know he was your childhood friend, I know no one tried to stop him, but what I don’t know is what you want to do about it.”

Izuku squeaked, then successfully got out, “What I want to do about it?”

“Yes.” Shouta crossed his arms and tilted his head just a bit, clearly being careful not to to display much emotion. “Look, kid, I know you. I know you’re smart. I know you have plans. I know you can handle things, even if for some reason you haven’t. I’m worried that reason is that you don’t think anyone will believe you, which I would have hoped you know isn’t the case anymore.”

Izuku shot to his feet so quickly he stumbled. The idea that Aizawa-sensei thought Izuku didn’t appreciate his teacher, didn’t understand just how much the hero had done, poured like lead through his bones. “That’s not-“

“Easy, kid.” Eraserhead placed one warm hand on Izuku’s shoulder and pressed him back toward the tree with infinite gentleness.

With a shaky breath rattling around in his lungs, Izuku opened his eyes and met the stare of his teacher. “Kacchan’s going to be a great hero.”

“No, he’s not.”

Izuku blinked.

“And he’s certainly not getting into UA. Don’t look at me like that. He’s not the kind of student I want in my class or Nezu wants in his school.”

“But…“ Izuku’s mouth tasted like cotton. He had words, somewhere (bound in paper and locked in a drawer by trembling hands with a key that burned across his collar bones).

Aizawa-sensei collapsed into a cross-legged position. “Heroes aren’t bullies, Izuku. Not the good ones. Not the ones like you already are and I train my students to be.”

Izuku said nothing, just stared and hoped Aizawa-sensei understood what Izuku was trying to say. He wasn’t sure why he hoped that, since Izuku himself wasn’t sure what he was trying to say.

Something must have gotten through, because Aizawa-sensei lifted and arm and placed his palm on Izuku’s curls. “You don’t need to explain now. Or at all, if that’s what you want. But I do need a decision.”

“Me?”

“Yes. If I was making the decision, Bakugou would be charged with assault, at the very least, and possibly sent to juvie.”

Izuku didn’t know what his face did, but he knew it was stiff, and apparently the expected response, since Aizawa-sensei gave a chuckle that sounded like tumbling stones. “Yeah, I didn’t think you’d like that.”

Aizawa-sensei stood, extending a hand that Izuku automatically accepted to help the boy up. “You have a week, Problem Child, to think about it. And not making a decision still counts as a decision. If you want me, or Tsukauchi, or your mom to decide, that’s fine. That’s completely okay, and we’ll all still be both proud and fond of you.”

They stopped under a ledge that provided protection from the starting rain and the flickering light over the stairs cast shadows over Eraserhead’s face. “I want you to ask yourself, though, whether one day, if Bakugou does become a hero, would you trust him to save you? To save your mom? Or, looking at it a different way, is there

anyone you know, right now, whom you wouldn't trust him to save?"

Izuku walked home with the voices of his Quirkless Support Group echoing with each raindrop. His Group that supported each other in their quirklessness, supported him in his desire to be a hero, supported the other society castoffs in their ever-expanding information network (his Group that Izuku wouldn't let Kacchan near with a ten foot pole and a barricade of steel).

It was his Group that made the decision difficult on multiple levels. If there had been only two notebooks, then Izuku could have decided more easily. Not easily, because Kacchan was his childhood friend and there were ribbons and threads and spools of emotions knotted in his chest all tied to the other boy, but more easily. He could have trusted (*trusted,* he had adults he trusted) the decision to Eraserhead or his mother.

But the Group, as much as they were people and individuals that Izuku wasn't sure Kacchan would save, not in a way that mattered, were also his Network. The bones of his Network. And because of them, Kacchan also had an entry in the third notebook.

The first notebook was for Kacchan (never brought to school and not just about his quirk; a potential decision all in its own if Izuku decided to never be bothered by the boy again, decided to *hurt* instead of help). The second one was for Endeavour (Bakugou could become a hero like him, and Izuku hated to imagine a world where Kacchan would be fine with that).

The third one was one of his Villain Notebooks. Sort of. It held multiple people and multiple entries. The third one was filled with criminals, which Izuku was beginning to understand weren't exactly the same thing as villains.

The thing was that not all of his Group were law-abiding civilians. Most tried to be, sure, but technically loitering was against the law, even though there wasn't much else to do when you were homeless and just needed an hour of sleep. Stealing was illegal, but when it made the difference between a gaunt-faced child, well, decisions were made.

The other thing, the mostly-though-not-entirely-accidental thing, was that the Group and the Network were no longer entirely the same entity. Part of this was simply because not everyone in the Group contributed to the same level. Which was fine, excellent even, because

Izuku would never force anyone (particularly a quirkless someone so used to force) into something they didn't want to do.

So some participants just shared their own stories. Some passed along gossip. Some talked about injustices their families and friends faced. Some sought out problems and talked to people and then brought their findings to Izuku. They did whatever they were comfortable with and knew that was okay.

Their comfort levels had grown as Izuku succeeded, as he came back with newspaper articles and arrest records and his first pay check clenched in hands that shook as he whispered of Eraserhead, internship, and shadowed eyes that actually saw potential in a quirkless boy's thin limbs.

(It had taken weeks, still, before Izuku recognized that increase in comfort, till he realized that he might have adults he trusted, but he also had adults who trusted *him,* and that. Well, maybe he was the hero Aizawa-sensei said he was.)

As their comfort level and Izuku's skills had grown, so too had the Network. Izuku didn't just hear about Yuri's courier job, but accompanied the man as a pretend apprentice and learnt the seedier sides of the city. He realized that Yuri's sick mother and Murata's grandmother are in the same care centre, so connected the two so they weren't lonely and was invited to the tea they started with several other highly knowledgeable elders.

He learned that Shin, Shin with the quiet voice who talked about his nieces and nephews as if they were his own, worked at an antique shop that dealt in stolen material. Material that Izuku was reasonably sure was provided by Shin's brother. Izuku didn't turn either of them in to the police.

He didn't have proof. He deliberately didn't have proof, even as Shin brought Izuku information on the occasional pawn broker that fleeced their desperate clients or thefts that had gone horribly, bloodily wrong. What Izuku did have was the blinding smiles of two tiny children in clothes worn and large on thin frames, ridiculously happy to let Izuku read them a story in the library before Group, before their Uncle took them home to a one bedroom apartment next to train tracks that roared all night.

This was the third notebook. This was the third heavily coded notebook that only involved names Izuku had made up, his own hero-

villain names because these people could be either. They could be.

Except society had failed them.

These people committed crimes, did bad things, sometimes not even for the right reasons, or well, reasons that Izuku could understand, could justify, but they did it because there weren't many (sometimes any) other choices. He wasn't legitimizing crime, Izuku didn't think. He still believed in heroes and villains.

He just, he got it. He understood how being told you're one, useless thing over and over and over made it true. Or true enough to invade your every moment and make movement, forward, backwards, sideways, any movement at all, paralyzing. He understood how it never ended up being simply what you were told, but also what you were shown and what your experience amounted to being.

Kacchan wasn't in this third notebook at first, because Kacchan wasn't a villain or a criminal. Izuku didn't give Kacchan an entry in this third notebook until it was three quarters full. Full of people his Network had shown him, sometimes inadvertently. Full of backstories that would never be in the media, but that made so much sense once Izuku had done some digging. Full of vigilantes that had chips on their shoulders and reasons Izuku might sort of agree with, in certain lights.

Kacchan's entry was after another teen's. A teen who'd been telling Izuku about a murder, because even if the police were looking for a murderer of homeless children, and this teen didn't think they were, and even if the police took this teen and his scruffy clothes and stapled skin seriously, he couldn't risk being sent home. So when a senior on the streets, a tired older man who came to Group with a beaming smile about once every month or two, suggested talking to Deku, this kid who knew things, the teen had figured, what the hell. He could out run a quirkless kid, surely.

Izuku had learned a lot about victimology for this case and found seven other victims from the teen's description of the crime. Tsukauchi and Eraserhead had put the killer away rather decisively.

Izuku went back. The teen had ghosts in his glare and hunger in his cheeks and a young girl hiding in his shadow. It was weeks later, after twenty-two sets of steamed buns eaten in an alley, that Dabi rested a shaking hand on the napping Toga's blond hair and told Izuku about quirk marriages and younger siblings and hero training that no one would believe.

Izuku wrote Dabi's entry that night and Kacchan's the next morning. They weren't the same. Kacchan had gone through none of what the older teen had. But. But Izuku had started thinking about the Hero System again. About training and regulations and the time before schools.

Dabi hadn't been given a choice whether he wanted to be hero (though he had, Izuku recognized the grief of a shattered dream) and trained rigorously for that fate. Kacchan had a choice, yes, but what kind of choice was it when everyone saw his quirk, saw a child's (a toddler's) enthusiasm and said yes, you will be a hero (over and over and over again made things true).

No one had ever told Kacchan no. They'd never taught him right from wrong beyond the dichotomies of heroes vs. villains, good vs. evil, and powerful vs. weak. Yes, Kacchan should have picked up some basic social skills and been able to figure out that some things weren't okay on his own, but that didn't change the fact that no one had ever taught him his actions weren't okay, weren't heroic

His parents were good people, but completely oblivious to the way the rest of their family piled expectation upon goal upon praise for their son in attempt to suck up to the future hero and gain bragging rights for the rest of their lives.

Dabi talked about his father (and Izuku had *thoughts* about this unidentified father, the kind he figured might belong under lock and key) in fits and starts and Izuku didn't have to wonder how society could produce a hero that corrupted by power and might and certainty; Izuku was watching it happen before his very eyes (that was Izuku's childhood friend they were ruining).

So Izuku sat in front of three unopened notebooks, hands tracing over thin paper covers in unsteady, shaking movements. One notebook for a person he loved and hated, one notebook for a hero that wasn't, and one notebook for the people that society had failed (that weren't villains *yet)*.

Aizawa had wanted to know what Izuku wanted to do with Kacchan. Kacchan who was wrong and had hurt Izuku and might hurt Izuku's Group or Network (Izuku's people). Kacchan, who could end up in all three notebooks if he continued down such as similar path to Endeavour.

Izuku stood up, palms flat on his desk hard enough to still them, with

his back hunched and eyed closed. He knew what he wanted to do with Kacchan, what he'd wanted to do with Kacchan since the first time he'd fallen in the creek.

What he wanted to do with everyone in that third notebook.

Izuku placed Endeavour's book in the drawer, then threw Kacchan's on top of it. Neither were relevant to his decision.

His hands were steady after the click of the key in the drawer and as he tucked his third notebook carefully into his backpack, followed by two blank notebooks (with cats on them; Aizawa-sensei had bought him *notebooks*), a new box of pens, and his coat.

He plotted train schedules in his mind as he locked the door and texted Aizawa-sensei to meet him at UA in a couple of hours. Izuku hadn't actually been to the school yet, but it wasn't like he didn't know the way.

Kacchan had hurt Izuku. Badly. Hero society, had hurt Kacchan. Insidiously.

If the problem wasn't just with Kacchan, then the decision couldn't be either (Aizawa-sensei wouldn't accept that answer alone, not after seeing the burns, not if Izuku wasn't one hundred percent sure that he wasn't doing this to avoid the issue).

If the problem was with hero society and hero *education,* then, well. Izuku supposed it was about time he got to know his Grand-Sensei in person.

Izuku was going to *help* them. (He was a hero, and he wasn't alone.)

Phase 1: Recruit the Heroes

Chapter Summary

> Izuku bonds with his Grand-sensei and Aizawa is too proud to be concerned. Aizawa introduces his sunshine family and Izuku gets a present from his would-be uncle.

Chapter Notes

> Thank you for the lovely comments at the start of this sequel! I hope you enjoy more insight into just what Izuku is Planning and some sunshine boys interacting. Aizawa's next!

Everything escalated with a presentation.

Izuku watched Aizawa-sensei look down at the thirty page document in front of him. Aizawa then looked up at the chart paper pinned to three separate walls and scattered on the floor of Nezu's office and across to the slide show presentation currently stuck on an animatic of a small rodent-like creature popping out of a box while saying thank you on a thirty second loop.

Next, Aizawa-sensei tilted his head and looked at Nezu, clearly taking in the slightly manic gleam to his eye and the animalistic flair to his grin. Izuku's Grand-sensei had dropped certain aspects of his genial attitude somewhere in hour three, after the first two cackles hadn't made Izuku bat an eye. In fact, Izuku rather felt like he'd passed one of the most important tests of his life with honours and hugs.

Aizawa then tilted his entire body to look at Izuku, taking in the wide eyes and the fine trembles and spasms that wracked Izuku's fingers. The tremble had started somewhere near the end of hour four, from nerves or exhaustion or clenching his pens too hard.

"I'm sorry, you've been here how long?" Aizawa asked.

"Six hours!" Nezu crowed.

"Right."

"Your delay because of that last minute mugging was really quite helpful, Aizawa-sensei." Izuku bit his lip, but couldn't stop himself from continuing. "The extra hour allowed us to focus in on curriculum and tie it to the particular challenges of age range and inconsistent

education-“ Izuku trailed off as Shouta stood and approached with quiet steps.

“This was not what I meant when I asked for a decision.”

“I-I know. I just kept coming back to- and it wasn’t *not* Kacchan’s fault, I’m not trying to get him out of taking responsibility, rather the opposite, I think, but society played a role too? And I can’t, well, I can’t fix society, just like that, but I could fix a part of it? Maybe- I think. I-“ He cut off this time with wide eyes when Aizawa-sensei placed both hands on Izuku’s slightly hunched shoulders.

“Problem Child. I am so fucking proud of you.” Aizawa-sensei had braced himself before he spoke so didn’t falter an inch when Izuku gave into the crying and octopus arms. Izuku just got very gentle hands in his hair and tracing over his back and he was just going to stay here forever, please and thank you.

A conversation went on over his head, though it was completely silent so Izuku probably would have been at a loss even if he’d left his hug, but eventually Aizawa-sensei stepped back.

“Okay, kid. I’m taking you home. You have the day off school tomorrow so you can sleep in.”

Izuku rubbed his eyes. “Tomorrow’s Wednesday? I don’t have the day off school.”

“I cleared it with your mom already. Plan Homeschool is set, particularly now that you’ve met Nezu. Problem Child, it’s eleven thirty at night. I’m taking you home and you get to sleep in as your reward for being an over-achieving chaos gremlin. I’ll bring you back to UA in the afternoon where Nezu will go over the plan to get you through early graduation and you can spend the rest of the year with us.”

Izuku blinked at his teacher, wondering if he should ask one of the many questions floating in his brain. He glanced at the very toothy grin of his Grand-sensei, and decided that no, it wasn’t worth it tonight.

Izuku maybe trusted them (Nezu had listened, helped, and made his idea *real* and Aizawa-sensei was *proud),* and Izuku was exhausted. He just hadn’t realized how much until Aizawa-sensei pointed out the time.

“K.”

Aizawa-sensei snorted, but turned around and crouched. “Hop on kid, I don’t think you’re going to even make it to the car.”

Izuku could. He absolutely could. He’d made it farther with dragging feet and drooping arms with less incentive. But.

He gave a little bow to Nezu, who glowed at him, and climbed on, burying his face in surprisingly soft hair and wrapped his arms loosely around Aizawa-sensei’s neck.

(He didn’t think he’d remember the trip back home, but he’d never forget the sound of breaths and heartbeats whispering in his ear.)

Izuku and Aizawa-sensei waked down the street in silence. The older man was happily sipping the coffee Izuku’s mom had poured into a cat-themed travel mug as she ushered them both out of the apartment. Izuku was eating a muffin, trying not to sigh in happiness at every chocolate chip he found.

The silence was nice. Izuku loved to talk, couldn’t always help the words that babbled forth when he had an idea he was working through, but he also loved the quiet. Well, the quiet that wasn’t awkward or forced or laden with traps that he was terrified of springing.

There were never traps in Aizawa-sensei’s silences. Aizawa-sensei’s silences were blankets of calm possibilities laced with trust.

Aizawa-sensei was the first to break today’s silence, with a sideways look over his coffee and smirk at Izuku’s tired eyes. “Recovered from Nezu’s Exam Hell yet?”

Izuku scowled, for all of twenty seconds, before he felt himself smiling. His Grand-sensei was *mean* but in the best, most challenging of ways. The last month could very adequately be described as Exam Hell, but Izuku had done it. He’d succeeded (the graduation party his mom had thrown with Aizawa-sensei, Nezu-sensei, and Tsukauchi had been one of the best nights of Izuku’s life; he’d never had so many people *proud* of him before).

Knowing this was perfectly visible on his face (and that the smile was preferable to the tears he could feel welling up at the memory) Izuku turned from his teacher to scan the streets still busy with the last vestiges of the morning rush.

“Are you going to tell me where we’re going yet?”

Aizawa-sensei lifted a brow. “And ruin your surprise reward? No. Feel free to guess, though.”

Izuku glanced up from under his bangs and hummed.“If you wanted to hear any of my many ideas, I would have needed two hours of extra sleep.”

The older hero snorted, reaching out to ruffle Izuku’s curls. “Cheeky. That might work if you didn’t regularly text Tsukauchi and I at midnight, kid.”

“Those were accidents!” As in he’d accidentally lost track of time and then accidentally texted them without checking said time because rabbit holes were dangerous dangerous things.

“Sure.” Aizawa-sensei’s smile slid into a sigh. “And we’re here.”

Izuku wanted to whip around and study his surroundings to see what he’d missed (because he had ideas and guesses and thoughts but none of them seemed *right*). Instead, he turned sparking green eyes to his mentor.

“Are you okay? You sighed. Is this a bad surprise? Or something you don’t want to do? Or don’t think I’m ready for? Because I trust you, I do, and if you’re not happy or don’t think I’m ready or something is upsetting-“

Izuku was cut off by the weight of a calloused hand settling and resting on his curls.

“Breathe, Problem Child.” His hand carded through Izuku’s hair to rest at the base of his skull. “You’re fine. That was an ‘I’m-too-tired-to-deal-with-this-energy’ sigh. It’s a very good surprise, and not just for you.”

Izuku blinked, even as he leaned into the weight of the hand. Eraserhead had originally been a little wary of all the hugs that were an important method of Midoriya appreciation. He’d responded very well to Izuku and his mother’s war of attrition, however, which

translated into a lot of proud head pats that were maybe Izuku's second favourite thing ever (after his mother's hugs, naturally).

"I'm not high energy right now?" Izuku knew he could be, but he hadn't been lying; two hours more sleep would have been amazing.

Aizawa-sensei opened his mouth but was cut off by a loud yell.

"SHOUTA."

Aizawa sighed again, turning around with red eyes to glare at a tall blond man with long braided hair and bright sunglasses. The man smiled a little sheepishly, but bounded over with all the enthusiasm of a retriever puppy.

They exchanged some kind of greeting, but Izuku wasn't really paying attention. Well, he was, because observation was one of his greatest strengths and Aizawa-sensei would find something far worse than laps for Izuku to do if he ever did something as foolish as zone completely out, but his awareness was down to maybe thirty percent.

The rest was on this man, who was fairly familiar. There was something about his face, and that shout. He was clearly close with Aizawa-sensei. Which made him likely either a hero or hero-adjacent, and that meant that the man probably looked rather different than normal. Izuku should still be able to tell who this was.

The strange man got a light slap up the head for all his fuss.

"Yamada. We're not alone, you buffoon. Calm down and say hello to your surprise."

"The one that I took a full day off for?" But Yamada obligingly tuned to Izuku, one arm still clutching Aizawa-sensei's, and then promptly froze.

"Shou. Hey, Shou." He used fingers with black-painted nails to tug on Aizawa-sensei's sleeve. "Shou. Is that *him?* Are you finally letting me meet your Little Listener?"

"Oh!"

Both men turned to Izuku.

"You're Present Mic! The braids really threw me!" Izuku blinked, once, as his own words hit him. "Oh, gosh, shit. You're Present Mic. I

have so may questions. Like frequency. And directionality. And sounds in general? Does your quirk work with whistles and hums or only words? Not that words aren't great, or that you aren't great with them. Your radio show is amazing. So are the help lines. And the hybrid model of agency-radio station and oops. Right. Um. Hello. Nice to meet you?"

Aizawa-sensei was laughing at him. Not out loud, but in his eyes. Izuku narrowed his own, taking in Present Mic's growing delight and Aizawa's growing smirk. And also the way the neither of them seemed to be inclined to move from the hold Present Mic had settled into with an arm hooked around Aizawa-sensei's elbow.

"You're best friends with Present Mic! And didn't tell me!"

Present Mic laughed. "And Midnight! The three of us went to UA together."

"Close your mouth, Problem Child."

Izuku only complied so he could scowl.

"You're going to send the day with Yamada. I thought you'd be pleased to get to talk to another hero."

"I am?" Izuku asked at a volume high enough to make himself blush red as he realized the force of his own words.

Present Mic laughed again, bright and sincerely happy in a way that Izuku wasn't used to happening around him. "I can do that. I've been offering to do that for literal months. But I find I'm suspicious, since I wasn't told anything ahead of time."

"Months?! I've been Aizawa-sensei's Intern for just over a month?"

"But he's been talking about you for much longer, Little Listener. And I know Tsukauchi's significantly ahead of me in achieving favoured uncle status."

Izuku stared before flailing at a realization. "Wait, yes! I agree this is very suspicious." They both turned to stare at a very unrepentant Aizawa as Izuku continued. "He told me this was a reward for graduating and possibly something I did with Nezu-sensei, but he's given me no other information and the timing and urgency with which we left my apartment was unusual."

“I agree with your Little Listener, Shou.” Present Mic was nodding so hard his braids went swinging. “This smells like a Plot.”

Aizawa sighed, going to to drink from his coffee before giving the empty mug an expression of betrayal. “Yes, fine, it’s a Plot. But I have Nezu’s and Tsukauchi’s willing participation,” he spoke over Izuku’s attempted interjection, “and Inko’s full support. So just trust me and take the distraction that will make you both happy?”

Present Mic’s eyes narrowed at his friend, clearly putting several things together. At Shouta’s nod the man’s eyes widened and he turned back to Izuku.

“How would you like a tour of the station?”

“So very much.” Which was very true, even if this was still suspicious.

They promptly turned their backs on Aizawa and started to walk away.

“I need him back by 2:30pm!”

“Yeah, yeah.’ Yamada waved without turning around, but Izuku ran back and threw his arms around Aizawa’s waist. Aizawa barely had time to run both palms through green curls before Izuku had raced back to Yamada’s (Present Mic’s!) side.

They walked along in the sunshine for a moment or two before Izuku stopped studying the tall man’s impish smile. “So,” Yamada said as he clapped his hands together.

Izuku looked up a little tentatively, biting back on the nerves struggling in his stomach with each step further from his mentor (but this was Aizawa-sensei’s best friend, someone Aizawa-sensei had let hang off him and smiled at in way Izuku had only seen directed at himself and Inko).

“How do you feel about a little passive-aggressive, harmless revenge for secret-keeping.”

Izuku tilted his head and considered his shoes (considered the many bullies that had lost their homework, their wallets, or their dignity by way of something that couldn’t be linked in any way to Izuku). “Positively?”

Yamada cackles. “Excellent. I’m thinking tour and then lunch with

Nemuri- that's Midnight. She's also been dying to meet her little nephew and has been begrudgingly kept at bay by Mr. Grumpy Pants."

Izuku didn't know whether to laugh at the description of his mentor or blush at the description of being a nephew.

"Ok," Izuku said softly, feeling the slight trembles of his hands buried in his pockets start to steady at Yamada's beaming grin. "You could also show me some of your cases, if you want! I mean, I'm not saying that you need me to solve them or anything, because obviously you're a pro and Aizawa-sensei's still training me, but, um, I could use it later? Like when he's giving me an exercise I can say I need to help you with something because I promised and he doesn't want to disappoint his friend? Or something."

There was a long pause where Izuku started counting weeds and got up to nine, before a solid, warm arm was slung around his shoulders (telegraphed, easy to dodge if Izuku wanted, and he found he didn't).

"I like the way you think!"

Izuku loved Yamada.

He'd already been pretty damned fond of Present Mic. Izuku hadn't been kidding earlier; the man's combined Radio Show-Agency-Help Line Centre was brilliant in the most practical of ways. The man himself, however, was electric and kind and wickedly smart.

Izuku could see how he complimented the skulking and kind and deviously smart Aizawa (could see how Yamada lit up at anything to do with Aizawa, and just how many of Aizawa's stories made sense now that Izuku could see this face and this name as part of them).

Yamada didn't just welcome Izuku's questions, he *matched them.* He threw out question after question about Izuku and seemed to dance around anything sensitive or painful with an ease that Izuku envied.

Also, he didn't limit the questions to details about Izuku. He wanted Izuku's *opinions.* Yamada clearly knew that Izuku was quirkless, and clearly didn't give a flying fig, but he wanted to know what Izuku thought about qirkism, villainous quirks, hero fights, damage

procedures, civilian evacuations, and anything else that bounced through the man's mind.

Even better, Izuku didn't always *have* opinions. Yamada threw out concepts and procedures and ideas that Izuku had never even thought of before. And he didn't care that Izuku hadn't thought of them before. Each answer Izuku gave seemed to delight the man while each look of puzzlement Izuku wore seemed to thrill him.

Once, about a twenty minutes walk from the park where they'd left Aizawa, Izuku had responded to a question about hospitals, medical centres, walk-in clinics, and agency responsibility by stopping in his tracks, falling into full mutterstorm, and digging into his backpack to grab a notebook and write a full page of notes in shorthand.

He'd frozen an inch from the bottom, slowly looking up from his page with creaking muscles. Yamada had grinned at him, provided three names that Izuku might want to research later, and asked to borrow a piece of paper.

His smile hadn't faltered as Izuku had returned to his backpack to pull out a smaller notebook with many missing pages (he didn't tear his Analysis Notebooks for anything, occasionally copying parts out by hand or making use of his mom's access to library photocopiers). Yamada had pulled a thin marker out of one of his jacket's many pockets, accepted the paper, and then made several notes about *one of Izuku's questions.*

He'd explained, absently, that he actually didn't know much about how evacuation procedures were standardized in other industries, having scrapped his Radio Station's procedures in a fit of disgust and re-built it step by step with his Agency partners and Aizawa over too many pizzas. He wrote a couple notes and slipped the scrap of paper in a breast pocket with a wink and a promise to ask a few contacts and get back to Izuku.

He was going to get back to him.

Izuku may have been in a bit of a daze by the time they actually made it to the Station. That hadn't stopped him from taking in the building and its people and its security measures with wide eyes.

They'd toured the Radio Station side of things more than the Agency, because as much as Present Mic was high up in his Agency, he'd really couldn't take an unknown kid past several security checkpoints with no warning.

Izuku really didn't care, though. It was fascinating to see how the different radio offices were set up and the care that was put into designing new segments and the research that was done before anything made it on air.

And then there were the call centres. Izuku had listened to Put Your Hands Up Radio many many times, though never actually had the courage to call in. He had, however, called in once or twice (or thrice) to one of the support lines that Present Mic had promoted on the show.

It had taken several promotions for Izuku to consider calling the help lines. Several particularly bad beatings (burns arcing across his skin and throbbing with a message he didn't want to hear) and he'd actually called. The operator had been kind and unobtrusive and once she ascertained that there was no immediate danger she had simply listened. Izuku had never said he was quirkless (he was desperate not stupid), but he'd cited quirkism and babbled his thoughts to a stranger.

He hadn't called much after starting his Group, but the calls had been help at a time when no one other than his mom would even consider helping him (maybe, someday, he'd tell Yamada that).

Seeing the Call Centre from this side of things was powerful, and seeing the training the operators were put through was comforting.

He adored the tour and adored Yamada. He'd been introduced as Yamada's nephew twice, banged into three doorways with his wild gestures, and had met five heroes.

He was happy.

Which was why Yamada's current frown sent cold eddies down his veins and trembles into his fingers (this might be where Izuku screwed up, where this ridiculous string of happiness frayed and unravelled and was never meant to be his in the first place.)

Izuku couldn't figure out where or when exactly the frown had appeared, which made finding and fixing his blunder very difficult. He'd been too caught up in the call centre and his Group.

Yamada had *asked* about the quirkless. Asked about what the Station and Centre could do to provide more resources and help. Had said that he wasn't putting this on Izuku at all, but if Izuku had any ideas he'd love to hear them.

And Izuku had ideas. His talk had slipped past mutterstorm and into babbling as Izuku discussed his Quirkless Support Group and the other anti-bullying library groups and the trends he'd noticed among the library patrons and community.

Yamada had looked impressed, at first, Izuku, was pretty sure. So the frown was…terrifying.

His words dried up, clogging his thought and rattling his fingers. Present Mic took a moment to notice, meaning that they continued down the fluorescent-lit corridor for silence past three doors before Izuku found the breath to force out a breathy, "Sorry."

Present Mic stopped short, whipping his head to look at Izuku. "For what, Little Listener?"

Izuku didn't really know. For ruining everything? Somehow? "You're frowning."

"What? Oh, no, that's not your fault." Yamada reached out a calloused palm, pausing slightly at Izuku's tiny flinch. When Izuku didn't move further away, Yamada lightly placed it only Izuku's curls, much more briefly than Aizawa's rough presses, more proof of concept than anything else. "Hey, hey, Little Listener. I was just thinking. You're kind of amazing, you know that?"

Izuku blinked. He really didn't know that.

Yamada huffed. "Yeah. That's what I was afraid of. But, hey, I've got to say, not everyone has a fully functional information network before they hit high school."

Izuku flatlined, he could feel his brain sending up signals and his body ignoring the completely. The result was a high, squeaky voice. "Information network?"

Yamada scowled, but in an exaggerated playful manner, shaking finger included. "You can't fool me. Shouta's kept me pretty up to date with your consulting exploits and if there's two things I know it's people and information." His eyes lit up and he looked around the empty hallway. "Ok, come on, one last stop. There's something you have to see."

They ended up three levels above in a room with computers and very comfortable chairs. It was a rather plain room, to be honest.

Yamada gestured Izuku to a chair as he bounced forward, seemingly unconcerned with Izuku's slow steps and swivelling head.

The moment Yamada sat down he was clicking and typing away, pulling up a specific program that seemed to have two main forms, one a search page and the other a seemingly endless spreadsheet.

"This is our main database; it gets information from every side of the business; hero reports, call highlights, radio surveys, and so on. There are some pretty crazy privacy protections and all the Call Centre stuff is anonymous, but its really helpful for analyzing trends and identifying areas of concern which we in turn use for staffing and support at our Agency, as well as provide information to other social services or educational groups as well."

Izuku's mind was whirling as he watched Yamada's mouse click through the different ways of sorting data and the graphing and table features.

"Like crime statistics, but broader. Like if you identified an upswing in certain keywords from the Call Centre, like increasing tags of bullying and quirkism, then you can provide a training course to the Call Centre, get a hero to do some school visits, and run a couple segments about equality or personal stories on the radio."

"Exactly!" Yamada clapped his hands together. "We have people, proper analysts and all that," here he grinned at Izuku, "that spend most of their time on this stuff. But I like to keep my hand in to make sure I'm still relevant and helping the right people. Also, well, it used to be just me and my laptop scrolling news sights and social media on Shouta's beat up couch every Sunday. I've always enjoyed this part, and thought you might too."

Izuku could barely manage a nod and decided that sitting on his fingers was really his best option.

Yamada passed him the mouse. "Have at it."

When Izuku just looked from the mouse to the screen to Yamada, the hero just laughed. "I'll provide some tips as you go, but I'd like to see what you come up with."

Izuku stuttered something out, he wasn't sure what exactly, but he was pretty sure the words 'privacy' and 'me' were in there somewhere.

Yamada leaned back, the chair creaking slightly as he crossed tan

arms. “Look, Little Listener, Midoriya, you’re a paid hero consultant and the official intern to Eraserhead, who’s very purposely on our books as a frequent associate. These things absolutely mean that you have clearance for far more information that you think you do, and that’s without whatever nonsense Nezu’s currently arranging in your name. Sure, Shou will need to sign some papers later, but you’ve earned this. I trust you.”

Izuku took the mouse with fingers that were suddenly perfectly still, wrapped securely in warm words. He turned to the screen, loosing himself in numbers and patterns so he wouldn’t have to find words he currently didn’t have.

It didn’t take long to get absorbed, to start looking up things like suicide rates and quirk types. Yamada didn’t flinch at the subject matter and even showed him how to import data from the Hero Commission Databases that Aizawa had already made sure Izuku could access.

There were so many possibilities, if he handled this right (and Izuku knew he could handle this right, particularly with his mom, Aizawa-sensei, Grand-sensei, and *Present Mic* to guide him). He didn’t even notice the time flow by until Yamada made a loud satisfied sound, clicked a few things on the computer next to Izuku’s, and reached with long fingers for a USB device he’d inserted sometime during Izuku’s awed exploration.

With a deliberate tap, Yamada placed the device next to Izuku’s bag. “Here. I can’t give you permanent access, at least until Shou or Nezu gets you a secure laptop, so hopefully this will tide you over. I mean, you’re more than welcome to join me another day in this room; man, your brain is *wild,* but this is the baby version of the software. It has all the basic components of the program I showed you, just none of the data. You can use it for your little information network.” Yamada grinned as Izuku opened his mouth to protest.

“Hush, you gremlin child. I’m not asking any questions, though please, please let me be there where Shouta figures out you have an entire spy network. I want his expression on film. Anyways, I’m sure you’ll have no problem anonymizing everything, but you should ask about security measures when your hacking lessons with Nezu start.”

Izuku picked up the bright yellow plastic and wanted to cry. Instead, he reached up for the thin cord around his neck. He bypassed the key to his desk drawer that held three (two) notebooks and removed

another, sleeker USB while hooking Yamada's gift in it's place.

With completely steady hands, Izuku inserted the sleek USB into the computer and opened his presentation, the little rat animatic welcoming him and Yamada both.

They still had time before lunch, for a streamlined overview of Plan R. Aizawa-sensei had gotten him up early, after all.

And Izuku didn't think Nezu-sensei would mind. Their Plan had come far from it's inception in Izuku's bedroom and Nezu's office and gotten a surprising number of approvals considering their rather quick timeline (Nezu-sensei had grinned, all teeth, when Izuku pointed that out).

Besides, Yamada was a teacher, Aizawa's friend, and clearly possessed the best social skills of anyone Izuku knew, barring possibly his mother. Izuku wanted Yamada's opinion (wanted his Plan to be the best it possibly could, especially now that he had permission to *ask,* to recruit participants, and therefore couldn't screw things up).

"There's something I'd like your opinion on, and, well, maybe your help with implementing."

Yamada turned bright and eager eyes to the screen, kindness around his mouth, and a ear facing Izuku.

(Izuku was getting *help*. Because he was a hero, and he wasn't alone.)

Plan R: Revenge (with a side of Reform)

Chapter Summary

> Shouta starts Phase One and takes on a middle school with some help. He doesn't take revenge on a child because he's a teacher, damnit (and also his Problem Child had a different idea).

Chapter Notes

> I hope you enjoy the fate of Aldera and Bakugou. Thanks to all the commenters of Plan C Meets Plan A, who's questions about their fate led to the initial ideas for this fic!

Everything started with a coffee. A coffee from a particular cafe on a particular corner across from a particular school (a coffee that wasn't stalking or surveillance or spying, thank you Tsukauchi, Hizashi, and Inko).

Eraserhead had that coffee at different times almost every day for three weeks and learned that he wasn't impressed with Izuku's school. He hadn't been impressed with the school since the first day he'd stood at his corner, leaned against a cold metal lamppost, and watched two sets of kids, one rowdy with flashy quirks and one meek with plain quirks, walk through the gates.

Now that Shouta had spent a month with his Problem Child, his Problem Child's brilliant kindness, and his Problem Child's abysmal self-esteem, Shouta wanted to burn the building down.

Shouta tossed today's perfectly full coffee in the trash (it had nothing on Inko's coffee and also didn't come in a cat mug) and pushed off from the lamppost with just a tad more force than necessary.

School had well and truly started by now (and Hizashi and Izuku were probably well on their way into bright-eyed trouble), so Shouta met very few people as he made his way onto the school grounds and towards the Principal's office.

He took great pleasure at walking across the office in his hero's gait, only stopping to win a glaring contest with a secretary with a permanent scowl. The young man froze half-way out of his seat, mouth open but not a sound coming out. Which was, of course, exactly enough time for Shouta to reach the closed door and swing it

open with a truly satisfying bang.

The Principal's office was clearly getting thorough maintenance and oiled hinges, which could not be said for some of the classrooms and student facilities (fine, there may have been some surveillance involved, but only after the warning signs had become particularly evident).

The Principal turned her equally oiled smile onto Shouta, and he immediately wanted to take a bath. One with fancy and very expensive soap.

"Ah. I'm currently occupied in a meeting right now. If you could please wait outside for a moment, I'll be right with you. We're just wrapping up."

Shouta tilted his head for a moment, trying to decide whether the Principal's voice sounded like nails on a chalkboard or the chirping of those tiny, perpetually angry dogs.

He might have been projecting just a bit.

Then again, a look at the other participants in the meeting had Shouta thinking that he quite probably wasn't projecting at all. Tsukauchi was wearing his I-am-a-professional-and-therefore-violence-is-wrong Face. Inko was clutching her over-large purse with white-knuckled fingers and clearly calculating her exact route to smacking the woman across her over the head with said bag.

"We aren't wrapping up." Inko said.

The Principal blinked slitted pupils. "Of course. I'm happy to discuss Midoriya, but perhaps another time could be scheduled for you and your brother?"

"Brother?" Aizawa asked.

Tsukauchi tilted his head. "I mentioned I had some concerns about my nephew. She assumed."

"Ah."

"Right." The Principal seemed a little off balance. Shouta couldn't wait to kick the chair from under her. Metaphorically speaking, of course. "Sir?" She made a gesture with one thin hand, politely asking for Shouta to leave the room and thus avoid a possible witness to the

scene brewing in front of her.

Shouta smiled. The Principal flinched.

“Eraserhead. Pro hero Eraserhead.” He prowled forward, throwing his ID on the desk in front of her before hitching a hip and sitting on the edge of her desk in a way that could only be described as looming. “And I’m in the right meeting.”

The Principal’s hand trembled at she reached for the ID, but her spine straightened as she looked back and met his eyes. Shouta would have been impressed, but he’d hugged a boy on this building’s roof who’d been trembling under the weight of a mask made of sharpened glass and shards of mirror.

“I see. I’m uncertain what Mrs. Midoriya has said to convince you to attend her action-seeking habits, but I assure you, your presence is unnecessary. Her son is quirkless and as such has a deep jealousy for his quirked peers. He constantly disrupts class and re-directs attention better spent guiding his peers into heroes and proper members of society. He’s rude, inarticulate, and constantly getting into fights.”

The Principal stopped for a moment to redirect her scorn onto Mrs. Midoriya, who had very deliberately let go of her bag and appeared to be practicing deep breathing exercises.

“Mrs. Midoriya has brought frankly ridiculous concerns of bullying and misconduct to our attention multiple times, and each had been disproved after a thorough inquiry.”

“Did you ever receive notice of the culmination of these inquiry?” Tsukauchi leaned forward, recapturing the attention of both the Principal and Inko.

Inko shook her head. “I was never even told they were starting an inquiry,” she said, quietly.

“Just because you lost the notices-“

“Then we would like to request copies of the complete records and full findings of these inquiries,” Tsukauchi interjected.

“Of course.” The Principal had an odd look on her face, like she wanted to sneer but couldn’t quite bring herself to do so with a Pro hero in the room. “That will take time, I’m sure you understand. Completed inquires into false claims are hardly the priority of my

school."

Tsukauchi tilted his head, staring at the Principal with cool eyes. "I rather think it's you who don't understand."

"Excuse me?"

"No." Shouta grinned again, all teeth. "I don't think we will. I'd hurry and find that evidence, if I were you."

"Evidence?" There was the scowl.

"Evidence." Shouta nodded, then pulled a rather thick folder out from one of his hidden pockets and let it thump to the table with a rush of spilling papers. "Like that."

She didn't look through the folder, didn't take her eyes of Shouta. That was the survival instinct kicking in, not that they would help her here. Shouta had the file memorized, anyways.

"Lists of structural damage. Improperly stored chemicals. Safety hazards. Broken lights. Mysterious stains and substances. Improperly cared for equipment, particularly those relating to quirk training. I mean, I'm a hero, not a building inspector or member of the School Board, but I gathered this from a basic walkthrough. Lady, your school looks like it's been hit by a a squad of villains and left for a three year old with some duct tape and a glue stick to patch back together."

"These are bright children with strong quirks and futures in heroics. You clearly don't understand that some damage-"

"Oh, right." Shouta dug in his pocket before throwing another piece of ID onto the Principal's desk. He placed both palms over the smooth metal and leaned forward. "Forgot to give that to you earlier." His UA Teacher's ID stared up at them both, along with bright red words that marked him as being a qualified talent scout. "What was that about me not understanding hero students and their needs?"

Tsukauchi stood up, letting his chair scrape across the floor with a loud sound and drawing attention before the Principal could speak. "Seems I'm also a bit forgetful." He put his badge next to Shouta's ID far more gently, for all that his coat flared with the anger he wasn't showing.

The Principal broke her pen, then tried to hide it and her hands on her lap.

Inko stood up next, not hesitating to take that step forward and place herself in line with the two men. “I don’t have a badge, as you well know. So this will have to suffice.”

She reached down into her massive bag and pulled out three notebooks, the same brand as most of her son’s. Her’s, however, were not neat and tidy with only the occasional scorch mark to mar them. Hers were bursting at the seams with cut-outs and pockets and the visible edges of receipts. They were scrapbooks, more than notebooks.

“These are my records of every single communication I have had with this school. Notes home about my son being a bully. The receipts for medical supplies or doctor’s visits from the same date as those notes. Report cards with corresponding assignments or tests. The same assignments completed by Bakugou Katsuki, provided by his mother who has been a friend of mine since our own school days. The discrepancy in grading is…intriguing. A copy of every single email, note, and phone transcript I have had with this school, containing every single concern, complaint, and worry I have passed on, and the reply or lack thereof.”

She reached into her bag and pulled out a much thinner notebook and added it to the pile. “A list of names and contact information for other parents. They may not want to help the quirkless boy, but a police investigation into quirkism and malpractice? Well. This school doesn’t only have students with strong quirks and just because my son was the easiest target hardly means he was the only one.”

“Most of them are quite willing to talk to us. My officers have been taking statements for several hours now. Witness testimony isn’t always perfectly reliable, but it does tend to carry more weight under certain circumstances.” Tsukauchi crossed his arms. “Such as overwhelming volume or credibility.”

“The credibility, in case you weren’t paying attention, comes from the Detective you just tried to brush off and the Pro hero who watched you do it,” Shouta added.

“Would you like to come give your statement voluntarily, to be taken in for questioning?”

The Principal blinked at Tsukauchi’s question. Midoriya Inko smiled.

The Principal chose to be taken in for questioning and Shouta was very pleased. Well, actually, she'd chosen to try and talk herself out of any and all culpability, throwing blame at everyone from the School Board to the custodian, but that hadn't been one of the options.

Shouta may have taken several pictures of the woman being marched down empty hallways in handcuffs (he figured Inko needed to start a new, happier, scrapbook).

The bell rang, and Shouta smiled again. He knew Tsukauchi had timed their departure perfectly (the Detective was a petty little shit, which was both well-hidden and one of their main bonding points) and thus several classes of students were getting a good look at their Principal and her new accessories.

Shouta, alas, would have to get that satisfaction secondhand. He had another appointment to keep.

He turned to Inko, meeting her green-steel eyes and the grimly satisfied expression on her face.

"I'm thinking fifteen minutes."

She tilted her head. "I'll give it twenty. You'll need the extra five for bluster."

"Got it."

Shouta opened the door and met burning red eyes. "Hello Bakugou." He walked forward and pulled out the chair across from the boy and his parents. With significantly more respect and control than he'd displayed earlier, he placed both his hero and UA IDs on the table so the boy could see them. "I'm Eraserhead. I'm an underground-"

"I know who you are." The boy was grinning and Shouta felt his temple throb. Yeah, he wasn't going to get through this being respectful.

"Stop smirking. You don't know jack."

The boy froze for the barest of moments before falling back into his cocky slouch, briefly uncertain now that the script had been changed. Shouta looked up briefly at his parents, but neither seemed upset with Shouta's approach. They were grimly determined, much like they'd been the last time Shouta had talked to them. He was glad; he'd been afraid they'd backslide or lose their resolve over this last week as the

pieces had come together.

Shouta pulled out another file, opened it, and laid out Bakugou's academic transcript, letters of recommendation, and application to UA. The entrance exam was still a month away, but Shouta had administrative access granted within his first week as a UA teacher (Nezu was gleeful in passing off his paperwork to his once-student).

He tapped the transcript with one blunt fingernail. "This is functionally useless." He tapped the recommendations. "This is absolutely useless." He placed a palm on the application. "This has been rejected."

"HAH." Bakugou stood up, sparking palms catching on the desk, and was immediately slammed down by his mother's hand on his shoulder. Bakugou didn't notice; he was too busy staring at his palms.

Shouta figured that after relying on his quirk for everything, being rendered quirkless might be a little jarring. Too bad he didn't really care (this boy had hurt Izuku with those palms).

Two red glares met across the table, Shouta quite comfortable winning a glaring and scowling contest with a teenager. A moment three heartbeats long, and he blinked, letting his hair sink down and not bothering to brush it back from his face.

"You are a bully and a criminal. We don't take those at UA."

Bakugou flinched, as Shouta had meant him to, but not as hard as his parents. The boy recovered by crossing his arms, the black sleeves pulling tight and highlighting white knuckles. Shouta was slightly impressed; seems the boy could bow to authority when he respected it, and he did respect Pro heroes.

Then again, the boy also averted his eyes, and not from shame. He was planning on ignoring that statement, then.

With a sigh, Shouta placed one last file on the table, this one marked with the police emblem. "Bakugou Katsuki. I don't make these claims lightly. I'm sure you saw the police presence in your school even before the officers escorted you and your family to this room. Your entire school is undergoing an investigation for Corruption, Child Endangerment, Quirkisim, and at least fifty different Health and Safety Violations. Your teachers' opinions don't mean shit."

"Grades are grades."

Shouta tilted his head at the challenge. “Naive.” Bakugou clenched his fingers. “Shut up.” Shouta really didn’t want to let the boy talk. He’d talked too much already. “Bias is rampant in this school and I think you know that.”

The boy looked away, but muttered, “I earned those marks.”

“I believe you.” The kid whipped his head up, red eyes confused, and was mirrored by both of his parents. “It just doesn’t matter after what your teachers did. Sucks doesn’t it? When one person or group ruins something for everyone?”

Shouta leaned back, his muscles protesting and a recent scar pulling taut across his stomach. He wondered if these kids, all of these kids who wanted to be heroes, knew how much the job actually hurt (Izuku did, Izuku twisted and winced the same way a seasoned Pro would and it made Shouta *angry* and twisted knots of shadow and anxiety in his stomach more sharply than any scar).

“You also earned juvie.” The parents flinched, this time, and Bakugou eyed them both.

“What.”

“Your school is going down. We have evidence, testimonials, video footage from nearby businesses. Bakugou, I have enough proof of you violating Quirk-use Laws in order to *harm other kids* to send you to juvie. Assault is serious enough without the quirk to have earned you at least a trial and a mark black enough to rob you of your chance at any hero school.”

“Tch. It wasn’t that bad.” Bakugou crossed his arms and sunk farther into his seat, not a retreat, but an attempt at casual control. The attempt failed spectacularly when he tensed at the soft question that came next.

“Are you sure?” Inko had entered the room softly, the angle of the door blocking her from view until she slid into place at Shouta’s shoulder. She stood firm and elegant, a swan among geese (swans were fucking vicious, they just hid it under white feathers and arcing necks).

She placed a large bin, bulky enough to need her to hold it with both hands, on the table just off to Bakugou’s side. “This is the first aid kit Izuku had under his bed. Over half of it is supplies for treating burns. Over. Half.”

She leaned forward, not meeting the blanched faces of her friends, though Shouta knew she'd had a long talk with them earlier in the week. "And just to be clear, I meant *hidden* under his bed. Because Izuku didn't tell me anything. Because Izuku didn't rat out this rat-infested school. Because Izuku, when asked, still said that *you would be a great hero."*

There were tears running down her face but her words were as clear as crystal shards lit by lightning.

"I treated you like a nephew, Katsuki. I made you cakes and proofread your papers and brought your favourite books home with me each week. I loved you, nephew, and I'm not naive. I know you weren't the only bully harming my son, but you didn't save him either. My quirkless son needed a hero, needed a hero closer than All Might, and, for all your talk, you never saved him."

Her arms twitched like she wanted to wrap them around herself, and Shouta glowered at Mitsuki when she took a step forward.

"So, I ask you again, Katsuki, nephew, are you sure it wasn't that bad? Because I didn't know how bad it was, and I still knew it was bad enough that I might come home one day to *find no one there."*

Bakugou was staring at the first aid kit, fingers flexing repeatedly and completely unable to look at Inko's tears. Shouta hoped he was stared at the flecks of rusted blood occasionally visible through the clear plastic (flecks that drove daggers into Shouta's gut).

"Why are you here, then?" Bakugou turned on Shouta, ignoring his parents and Inko completely, though there was a grain to his voice. A sign of strain that the boy's bravado wouldn't have let show before. "If I'm a failure and a fuck up, *why are you here?*"

Bakugou had injected enough venom into his voice that he should have sounded angry, but he really just sounded like a boy with his whole world crushed to dust around him. Shouta could see the kid beneath the bluster shockingly clearly, and, what was worse, could see the way that venom would seep from the kid's voice into his bones.

Shouta may have called him a criminal, and he did use his quirk in ways that hurt people and broke the law, but the kid was still a kid. He wasn't a villain, yet, just a bully with a dream of being better.

And the dream, according to Izuku, was the important bit (Izuku who didn't want revenge so much as reform, who wanted his childhood

friend to be *better* instead of to be hurt).

Shouta sighed out the tension from his shoulders and the anger in his gut, letting himself sway forward slightly as he laid a final folder with UA's logo on the cover.

"Because you aren't a failure and a fuck up. You have failed and you have fucked up, yes, but so has almost everyone around you. And, honestly, you're not that special."

The kid blinked, perturbed.

Shouta ran a hand over the folder, the scars littering his fingers standing out against the blue of the paper.

"UA has recognized that there are a number of kids who, for various reasons, would never meet our traditional acceptance standards. Kids facing homelessness, enduring abuse, undergoing discrimination, practicing vigilantism. Kids who have potential, if the various pitfalls of society weren't beating it out of them."

Shouta tilted his head and flicked the file open, refusing to let Bakugou's gaze go. "UA is running a pilot program: Class 1R. There's still an entrance exam, though applicants need to be invited and only twelve or so students will be in the class. It's not a heroics class. Traditional coursework will be completed with practical quirk training focusing on control, but either transferring into the heroic course or streamlining into apprenticeships will be very much an option.

"The goal is individual support and growth. Applications will also include professional assessments and recommendations of therapy or anger management which will be requirements for graduation. All the details are in the package, including the contact information for Ectoplasm and Hound Dog who will be spearheading the program along with Principal Nezu. They'd be happy to take your questions."

Bakugou's fingers drifted across the pages, but he didn't flick through them, too busy staring at Shouta, who stared right back, the bags under his eyes weighing him in place.

Shouta's kid was too damn kind and too damn brilliant. Izuku and Nezu had come up with the bones of the program, really fucking solid bones, but it had been Shouta and Nezu who'd been tap-dancing across regulations to get this thing up and going for the following school year (tap-dancing with a dash of blackmail, and Shouta didn't actually want to know how Nezu got the go-ahead from the

Commission).

Ectoplasm and Hound Dog had been fucking gifts as well, and Shouta owed them so much coffee. Between Ectoplasm's injury, his quirk, and his aesthetic, the man knew a thing or two about overcoming difficulty. Hound Dog had a volatile quirk of his own and several very solid reasons to be the fully certified professional working as a guidance counsellor at a school for teenagers being trained for combat. The two had jumped at the idea.

Their reactions to Izuku had been hilarious. Both heroes had been approached by Nezu, who'd only thrown out that the idea came from someone working with Aizawa. Izuku hadn't met the two heroes until they'd been fully immersed in the idea for weeks, helping to flesh it out and get it off the ground.

The faces of Ectoplasm and Hound Dog when they realized the creator of 1R was a teenager was hilarious, but not nearly as precious as when they decided to say fuck it and throw praise at the teenager anyways. (Shouta and Nezu had both spammed the group chat with photos of Izuku getting fanboyed *at* for the first time and Tsukauchi and Inko both had new frames on their desks).

Regardless, it was a good program and Bakugou's best option. And the kid knew it. He looked up at his mother for the first time since Shouta came in the door.

Bakugou Mitsuki shook her head, shaggy hair drifting across her face. "No, kid, don't look at us. We love you," her husband wrapped an arm around her waist and nodded, "We love you so much, but we're disappointed as fuck."

Bakugou's eyes widened slightly before whipping down back to scowl at Shouta and the new UA application.

Bakugou Masaru tapped the application. "It's your choice, we'll support you either way, but you need to make the choice. This is where all our actions landed us. Time to take responsibility."

Bakugou oped his mouth again, but Shouta cut in. They'd gotten through this meeting with surprisingly little bluster by a combination of completely blindsiding the boy and emotional warfare. He didn't want to loose that edge.

"What, going to say that it's not fair? It isn't. Not at all. This school and these adults failed you miserably and are going to jail for it while

leaving you shafted. But hey, at least you're uninjured. At least you don't have bruises and cuts and *burns* tracing over your skin. At least you have a *choice.* At least you've never stood on a roof and had to tell a stranger that you *weren't going to jump."*

Shouta leaned forward, palms flat on the table and Eraserhead wrapped around his words like a threat. "I'm telling you, as a teacher of heroes and a Pro myself, that you currently don't have what it takes. You still want to be a hero? Fine. *Prove me wrong."*

(Prove Izuku right.)

Shouta stood in an empty hall and breathed. He heard footsteps echo, but didn't open his eyes, somehow having come to recognize both of the incoming gaits without conscious thought.

"Ready for Phase Two?" He asked.

Inko's hand slipped around his arm and she leaned her head on his shoulder. "Absolutely." Her voice was the soft of an assassin's creep.

"I'm so fucking ready." Shouta opened his eyes at the bite in Tsukauchi's tone. The Detective shrugged with a lopsided grin. "What? This was fun, and needed, but Phase Two is my mess to clean up. And I'm going to do so even if I have to smack him upside the head myself."

Inko giggled. "I'll loan you my purse."

Tsukauchi nodded. "I accept your offer."

Shouta was escorted out of the school by a short woman planning what kind of snacks went with a good threatening scolding and then waved goodby to a lanky man planning the kidnapping of a public figure.

He walked by the coffee shop without a second glance and felt the best he'd felt all week (possibly much longer than that).

Reform Sometimes Requires Revenge

Chapter Summary

> Izuku helps his friends, finds someone suspicions on his couch, and introductions and plans are had all around.

Chapter Notes

> Hey! So this is a little later because I ran into a plot problem I had to fix. On the bright side, you will now have one extra chapter! I hope you enjoy Dabi and Toga being added to the mix.

Everything ended with a folder. Well, two folders. The folders were bright blue with the UA emblem embossed on the front and they burned holes in Izuku's bag the same way words burned in his ears.

Yamada's words in particular. And Nemuri's, because Present Mic and Midnight wanted him to call them by their *names* (well, their names with an Uncle or Aunt in front of them, but they said they'd work up to that).

Izuku took a deep breath and wrapped surprisingly steady fingers around the handle of the train. It had been a really good day. Aizawa-sensei's friends had liked him and called him cute and thought he had a good head on his shoulders (he might have been paraphrasing, but to be fair, Nemuri had done a lot of cooing and also a lot of threatening an absent Shouta for keeping Izuku to himself for too long).

So. A good day. And now Izuku had to decide if the day was going to continue being good. He had a decision to make, and despite the fact that the two blue folders in his bag kind of proved the decision already made, and despite the fact that he'd left Yamada and Nemuri after lunch with talk of an appointment that was only true in the broadest sense, he could still change his mind.

He wouldn't. But he could.

He had his mother and his sensei and his Grand-sensei and several aunt and uncle-like people who wanted him and this was amazing and terrifying and wonderful.

He also maybe had friends. And holy fuck was he scared to lose them.

Izuku huffed, his breath briefly showing on the metal of the train, before squaring his shoulders and getting off at a rather dilapidated stop.

He took two lefts, a back alley, a staircase, a right, and a broken metal gate before ending up in an abandoned park. An almost abandoned park.

“Green Bean!” Strong arms wrapped around Izuku’s neck and he staggered slightly before adjusting to the weight and slipping an arm around the blond girl’s waist to stabilize them both.

“Hey, Toga.”

She bounced back, though only enough to look at him up close, fangs poking up in a devilish smile. “Hi! Where have you been? It’s been almost a week! I’ve missed you. And saw a murder! Well, no, just a stabbing. But there was a hero! Do you want to hear about the hero?”

A sigh interrupted before Izuku could, and Dabi reached over to literally grab Toga by the scruff of her jacket and lift her a foot away. “Let the kid breathe, Toga.”

She pouted and crossed her arms as he lowered her to the ground.

“But she’s right. You probably want to hear about the hero. They’re new, but did a pretty solid job. Didn’t even sneer at us bottom feeders.”

“Um, maybe later?”

Both Dabi and Toga both paused mid-movement to turn and stare at him.

“Is he sick?” Toga tilted her head.

“Hm. Nope,” replied Dabi. “That’s his business face.” The older teenager promptly sat on a bench, his over-sized coat flaring dramatically in move that Izuku had one caught him practicing.

“Ah.” Togo dropped to the ground so she was sitting cross-legged against Dabi’s knee. “Excellent! Who is it today? A murderer? A murder victim? A missing kid?”

Dabi gave Toga’s head a resigned pat and then left his hand there as if he could control her bouncing through its weight. He smirked up at

Izuku. “Oh tell us great spymaster and provider of sandwiches and steamed buns.”

Izuku blushed. He had maybe been spending a lot (all) of his allowance and then some (a lot) of his consulting pay check on food and clothes for his Network. Sure, a lot of what he did was based on information and mutual tip offs, but it worked out for everyone if his Network was warm and fed and more alert, right? It was payment for services in a tender his people would actually accept and use.

Dabi and Toga were special, though. He wasn’t exactly sure why. They weren’t the only teens Izuku talked too, that he knew lived out of shelters and alleyways and parks. They weren’t even the Network members he talked to the most, at least initially, though Dabi was one of his most consistent contacts from the first moment Izuku had handed him a newspaper article covering the arrests for that first case Dabi had brought forward.

It might have been the steam buns. It might have been that they all wore long sleeves. It might have been the burns, because Dabi’s were definitely worse but Izuku’s were in the shape of hands and that was the kind of thing the older teen noticed. It might have the the speed talking, because Toga could actually keep up with Izuku and took his mutterstorms as a challenge. It might have been the fact that they were all giant nerds and once spent four hours breaking down one hero fight from several different angles.

It might have been because they were friends (Izuku didn’t know what to do with that thought so hadn’t looked too closely for fear of mirages and illusions and lies).

Izuku had taken too long to answer, though, and both teens looked at him with worry in their eyes. Well, no, Toga had worry in her eyes, Dabi’s worry was visible in the hands that he’d buried in coat pockets to keep his tapping out of sight.

“It’s fine!” Izuku blurted. “Nothing bad. Just. Um. I want your opinion on something.”

The two exchanged looks before turning back to Izuku. “Okay,” Dabi said slowly.

Izuku looked at his hands. They were trembling again. Faint tremors that tapped out the same beat of the anxiety thrumming against his skull. He was silent as he stared at the cuts and abrasions on his fingers, for once the result of training instead of avoiding bullied and

pain.

He took a rattling breath full of air that tasted of mildew and leaves.

“I don’t have friends.” That had not been what he’d meant to say. “Not since I was four and diagnosed quirkless. Fuck, I don’t even have acquaintances. I have bullies and people who’re indifferent. That’s, that’s not say that I don’t value my Group or my Network, or, shit, Eraserhead and the Detective and all the others who are helping me. I think they might be my family and that is so terrifying and I love them so so much but they’re not my age and they’re not my friends, because I don’t have those.

“Except, except I have you. You two were the first I told about Eraserhead’s offer, beyond, well, my mom, and I’d already ran most of the way here before I’d even realized what I was doing. I tell you about my consulting and ask for your advice, and just complain. When I need that. When it’s not fair and I can’t sit with that knowledge in my brain any longer. Because you’ll listen and just let me be upset even if it’s something stupid and, ever since that first success, you’ve just expected me to be able to keep up and help and never doubted me and, and you’re like friends, I think. Though I don’t- I don’t have those.

“And, look, I want to help, because it’s what I do, and I like you, and you help *me* so much and. Just. I have an idea. I think it’s a good one? One that can help. But, but if you don’t like it or don’t want it than that’s fine! I don’t care. Wait, not- I care. I care because I like you and I want you safe and happy, but it’s absolutely your choice. I mean, I probably couldn’t force you anyway, you’re both scary-strong, and I wouldn’t try! So if you don’t like it, that’s fine and I still want, I’d still like, I’d want to keep-“

Dabi’s rough palm closed over his mouth even as Izuku felt Toga wrap both of her arms around his left elbow.

“Breathe,” Dabi ordered.

Izuku complied, a great shuddering thing that shook his whole body and made him shake even with a line of heat pressed into his side from Toga.

Dabi slipped his palm down Izuku’s cheek and under his chin, cool fingers forcing, with an ash-light touch, Izuku to meet ember-dark eyes. “Tell us your idea.” Dabi stepped back, slipping his hands back into deep pockets. Toga stepped closer, not loosening her hold in the

slightest. “Relax, Green Bean. It’s not like we’re swimming in friends, either. We’re not going to toss you or your snacks away because of an idea. Talk. What’s your scary-smart brain come up with this time?”

Izuku did an awkward shimmy made all the more difficult by the smiling, clinging Toga. He eventually reached into his bag and pulled out the two blue UA folders and their 1R information and application packets. He handed them off to the two teens, Toga pouting when she finally had to release Izuku so she could flip through the information.

Dabi’s face quickly settled into cold blankness, but his eyes moved rapidly over each and every word. Toga went with skimming titles.

“Izuku,” she asked. “Izuku, this is for hero school?”

“Well, sort of? It’s based out of UA and the end goal would be a hero licence, but the path would be a little different. It would come with dormitories and a food budget, like a scholarship, though there’d be some pretty strict behaviour guidelines I’m not sure you’ll appreciate. But there’d be quirk training! And medical help.” He very deliberately didn’t look at Toga’s gaunt frame and Dabi’s peeling skin.

“Zuku.” Toga looked at him, completely calm as Izuku had almost never seen her. “You think we could be heroes?”

“What? Of course! I mean, I know neither of you really like Daylight heroes, but you’d both be awesome Underground heroes. I mean, I know like, five instances in the last two months where a quirk like yours, Toga, would have saved Eraserhead so much work and can think of another three from the news where you could have gotten information so much more quickly than the police managed. And I know Dabi’s been skating the edge of vigilantism for a while now.

“Besides! These heroes can actually help. Teaching is what they do, and Nezu-sensei’s vetting procedures are meticulous. Ectoplasm, the hero in charge of the class, is really fired up about everything. Oh! And Vlad-King works there too! I straight up stole some of his techniques for groundwork in my recommendations about controlling your bloodlust and iron intake.”

Izuku ran a hand through his hair, brain whirling as he tried to find the right words amidst all his ideas.

Toga was staring at him. Dabi was staring at the papers, though his eyes had stopped moving.

“And. Well. It’s school. I know you like the idea of school.” They all ignored the pleated skirt and second-hand blazer that Toga refused to swap out with practiced ease. “And they’ll train you how to stab people legally?”

Toga waited a beat, a breath, eyes wide and slightly glassy, before something shuttered and her smile fell back into place. “Sold!” She threw herself at Izuku and wrapped around his back, her chin resting on his shoulder so they could both turn to Dabi.

They both knew he was the harder sell and that Toga wouldn’t go without him.

Dabi was older than them both, old enough to have gone through at least his first year of high school already, though Izuku wasn’t actually sure if he had or not. Either way, Izuku and Nezu had crafted the class so age wan’t an issue, recognizing that sometimes life screwed up the traditional education path quite handily. Izuku had made sure to include that information in the folder he’d given Dabi.

Dabi closed the folder and his eyes.

“Izuku.” He paused, then clearly switched what he was going to say. “This was your idea, wasn’t it?”

“Well, yes?” Izuku reached up to run a hand through his hair. Again.

Dabi snorted. “No, I mean, obviously this was your idea. But you said Ectoplasm ‘was really fired up’ as in you’ve met and talked to him. And you’re talking like we’re already guaranteed places.”

“Oh. Well, yes? Kind of. I mean the idea was mine, though Nezu and Eraserhead and Ectoplasm ran with it quite a lot, though in really cool ways! I got to sit in on a lot of those meetings. And they did say they’d take my recommendations really seriously? And I’ve got a few, from my Network notes. But, I wanted to offer it to you both, first.”

Dabi ran his thumb over the UA emblem. “Yes.”

Both Izuku and Toga perked up, though not completely. They recognized the incoming ‘but.’

“Yes, I want to say yes. Toga, you should go. But, there’s something I haven’t told you.”

“Oh, you’re talking about Endeavour.”

Dabi froze, and it was only at that moment of stillness that Izuku realized how much the other teen was always moving, always shifting, always watching and and ready.

Toga detached herself to go stand by Dabi, not touching him, but decidedly there.

“I never told you that.”

“No.” Izuku shook his head, curls flying. “But I’ve had a notebook on Endeavour since all my notebooks were dedicated to heroes. It doesn’t take much research to realize something is off about that man. Then add my villain analysis, the response his agency gave me when Deku offered them a consult, Eraserhead’s opinion, hero back chatter, my lovely new resources, and yes, the various things you’ve implied or said, and I think I have a pretty good grasp of the picture.”

Izuku tilted his head to look at the sky for the first time since he got to the park, though he really wasn’t seeing the clouds.

“I mean,” the words came out slowly, in that way that meant he was rearranging lines and trails in his mind, “there are a couple of plans to deal with him locked in that notebook at home; the timelines could be moved up.”

Reform was great, and Izuku was very very happy with Aizawa-sensei’s pride but that didn’t mean Izuku had never thought about revenge. Petty or otherwise (somehow, he thought these plans might also make Aizawa-sensei proud and maybe it was time to test that).

He looked back to Toga’s delight and Dabi’s disbelief. Izuku blinked when Dabi did something completely unexpected; he laughed, a sound full of rust and dust but also laced with what might have been relief.

“Fine. Fine. Okay. Let's go get that notebook.”

“Wait, really?” He’d never offered to take them home, not because he didn’t want to or because he thought his mom wouldn’t love them, but because that was a line. A very thin line made of bricks and walls and past experiences that he was quite sure they hadn’t wanted to cross.

Dabi handed Toga his blue folder. “I’m saying yes to 1R on the condition that the plan for Endeavour is suitable, which means I want to see it.” He smirked. “We’re about to follow you into hero central, I think we can start with a visit to your apartment.”

“Okay!” Izuku smiled. “Only if you’re sure.”

“Green Bean,” Dabi hooked one arm around Toga’s and one around Izuku’s drawing them both out of the park. “You’re the spymaster of an information network that puts both police and gangs to shame and got the number one hero school in Japan to create a reform class for villains and vigilantes in what, two months? I’m pretty sure the plan is suitable; how hard can disgracing one corrupt hero really be in comparison?”

Izuku tilted his head, considering the shiny new resources that had just been given to him and the training at his fingertips. “A pleasant challenge?”

“Does this mean I get to stab Endeavour?” Toga asked as she bounced along.

“No,” Dabi said.

“Maybe.” Izuku grinned at Dabi’s flat expression and Toga’s delighted cheer. “I’ll see what I can do.”

Izuku and Toga were still linked at the elbow when they approached his apartment. He wasn’t really sure which one of them was stopping the other from running away, but he was grateful all the same.

He pushed open the unlocked door with a hesitation so brief it would have gone unnoticed if he were with almost anyone else. Or well, anyone else who wasn’t a street kid or hero or law enforcement officer (he should maybe start hanging out with less observant people, except he had family *and friends* now and they were precious and beloved and special).

“I’m home!” He switched his hold to Toga’s wrist and considered powering them through to his room, calling a quick, “Hi Mom, hi Dad,” before coming to a complete and total halt at the sight of a skeletal man sitting hunched on his couch.

Toga broke the silence, which was good, because neither Aizawa-sensei or Izuku was going to be doing that any time soon. “So. Is Zuku stuck because of us or them?”

Dabi snorted but placed his elbows on Izuku's shoulders and his chin on Izuku's hair. "I think it's actually because he called one of them 'dad' and I distinctly remember him saying there wasn't one of those around."

Izuku still didn't move for a moment, but then Dabi's words sunk in and he flailed. "I said what?!"

A quick look at Aizawa-sensei did show the man looking shocked-blank instead of tired-blank. And Aizawa-sensei ostensibly knew why All Might was sitting on Izuku's couch, so he probably wasn't surprised by that. Which mean Izuku's teacher had definitely heard Izuku call him dad. Izuku blushed so quickly he felt his skin heat up. "Um."

Aizawa opened his mouth but immediately closed it with a look of extreme gratefulness when Izuku's mom came out with a tray of snacks, followed by Tsukauchi with a tray of tea cups.

"There are a lot more people currently in my home than I expected." Possibly more than had ever been in Izuku's home, to be honest.

"Hi honey, welcome back." His mom blinked at the teenagers still draped over Izuku. "Who's this? Oh," she blinked a bit as she walked around Aizawa, "Hello, Toga."

Toga bounced. "Library Lady! Zuku! You didn't tell me your mom was the nice Library Lady!"

Izuku hummed, but had also used the distraction to refocus on All Might who was looking very cowed. "I'm told it's generally obvious. What with the hair and the smiling and the energy."

"And the observation and the brain and the sharpness?" Dabi threw out, getting approving nods from both Aizawa and Tsukauchi. "We're the Green Bean's friends, by the way. Sappy talk of affirmation and all."

His mom dropped her tray, her soft gasp enough to pull Izuku's attention even before the clang and grunt of effort that was Tsukauchi once again showing off his superior reflexes and snack-saving abilities.

Izuku didn't actually go to his mother, since he felt both Toga and Dabi tense at the gasp, stiffening into a ready posture only found on people who've frequently had to flee situations suddenly gone wrong.

Their postures quickly gained a slant of confusion, however, when his mom gave a smile of sunshine and rain showers and spring winds. “I’ll get more tea!”

Aizawa and Tsukauchi gave each other a look, even as Izuku’s blush got worse and he rubbed the back of his neck, half-turning to face his friends. “Um, so my mom is used to me not having friends?”

All Might flinched, effectively drawing attention back to himself.

“Right,” said Aizawa, clearly happy to cut right through the emotions of everything. “This idiot owes you an apology.”

“Um,” replied Izuku as he felt Dabi’s elbows dig into his collar bones.

“Oh, he really does.” Tsukauchi finished setting the snack tray down in order to sit on the arm of the couch next to All Might. “And community service by way of hours upon hours of paperwork and sensitivity training out of the Police’s Human Resources Department.”

“And a week with the Rat.” Aizawa-sensei shrugged. “Your Grand-sensei hasn’t given me an itinerary yet but there was a lot of cackling involved in it’s completion. And muttering, which is new.” The look Aizawa-sensei shot Izuku was vaguely accusatory with a backing of pride.

Tsukauchi nodded and placed a palm on the back of All Might’s neck and bowed both of their heads, though All Might didn’t look to be struggling against the forced motion. “I heard you ran into All Might’s Secretary, Yagi Toshinori, and he said some unkind things. I apologize for my friend; he has a chronic case of stupidity that flares up now and again.”

“Ah.” All Might blinked. “Yes.” He bowed again, yellow hair bobbing.” I’m terribly sorry for my words. They were based on inconsistent context and heavily influenced by a terrible day and not inconsiderate pain. Ah. Though that is not an excuse! I am sorry for not properly considering the ramifications of my words.”

“You failed to consider the ramifications of crushing a kid’s dream on a roof?” Izuku almost didn’t recognize his own voice. He did recognize the stiffing of Dabi’s spine.

“What.”

“Dabi.” Izuku reached out to grab a fistful of black coat that was now

standing directly in front of him.

“No, seriously. *What.”*

Toga stepped forward as well, silent, but hand slipping into the pocket that Izuku knew held her favourite knife. Izuku reached out to grab her sleeve as well. Just in case.

“Stop that. It’s fine.” Izuku huffed when neither of his friends listened to him.

Dabi said, “I doubt that.”

Shouta said, “It’s really not.”

Izuku leaned around the too-tall frame of his older friend to stare at his teacher. “Stop encouraging violence.”

He arced a brow. “Implicit violence is not explicit violence.”

“I like him.” Dabi told Izuku as Izuku finally pushed his way back between his friends.

“That tracks,” Izuku muttered, hand splayed across Dabi’s sleeve in a likely futile gesture of calm. He’d rather expected Aizawa-sensei and Dabi would get along, once they got past the mutual suspicion.

Apparently threats to Izuku fast-tracked the process.

“I promise I’ve been shown the error of my ways.” All Might glanced between Tsukauchi and Dabi but outright flinched away from a scowling Aizawa. “I absolutely retract my words and have changed my opinion. Or rather, you have changed my opinion. You’ve done some very good work, my boy.”

“Not yours.” Aizawa crossed his arms.

“And not good!” All heads turned to Toga, who was, thankfully, only brandishing a finger at Yagi. “Zuku is the best spymaster ever!”

“What?” Aizawa and Tsukauchi said it together, but one voice had more glee than the other and Izuku really wan’t sure which was which.

“Oh, um. Surprise? I have an information network. I mean, how else did you think I got my information?”

“It’s a very neat operation.” Izuku beamed at his mom’s praise as she came in with more tea. “I’m very proud.”

“Right. Problem Child. Who else knows about this?”

Izuku tapped his chin. “Beyond the people in it? Um. Not many. Well, there are key players and channels for people to get in contact with me, but in terms of knowing that I, personally, kind of oversee the whole thing? No one not in this room. Besides Yamada.”

Aizawa blinked as Tsukauchi excused himself to laugh in the kitchen. “My Yamada?”

“Yes.” Izuku looked over to his mother to confirm that she had noticed the possessive (she had, which was good, because Izuku had *so much* to say about that after listening to Yamada’s pining throughout the day). “He figured it out when we were talking about information mapping, databases, and trends.”

Aizawa sighed and buried his face in his capture weapon.

“I like your friends?” Izuku tried to comfort him, but froze almost immediately.

His sensei opened one eye. “Friends?”

Izuku shuffled his feet a little, knocking into Toga. “Yamada may have invited Nemuri to lunch. They may have also decided to adopt me and you may need to watch out for some form of retribution for, and I quote, “hoarding this precious little genius and denying us our Auntie and Uncle rights.’”

The only sound was Tsukauchi struggling to breathe in the next room, so Izuku shrugged. “I like your friends.”

“Right.” Aizawa ran a hand through his hair. “I like yours, too.”

Izuku scowled as Toga cheered. “You just like them because they implied violence.”

“On your behalf, yes.”

Dabi snorted but Izuku’s mom interrupted with a chuckle. “Alright, you both have good taste in people. If we may return to business for a moment?”

“Oh! The notebook! Right.” Izuku made to dash to his room, but Dabi

caught is sleeve and jerked his thumb at Yagi.

“I think they meant Bone Bag over there and his lack-lustre apology.”

Izuku stumbled at his halted momentum and then stopped. He turned around very slowly to stare at All Might. All Might, the Number One hero.

All Might, the Number One hero, sitting on his couch, *apologizing.*

“This could work.”

“Shit.” All Might turned at the return of Tsukauchi, clearly hoping for some clarity from the one person he’d known at the start of the day. “You’re in for it, Yagi. That’s his thinking face.”

His mom nodded as she passed a resigned looking Aizawa a giant mug of coffee. “The dangerous one.”

Toga tilted her head. “I think that’s the one he made before deciding the little old lady at the corner store was the one handing out hot chocolate laced with spite and laxatives.”

“I mean, he was right.” Dabi added. “Also reminds me of the one before that creep who was harassing you disappeared.”

“Oooh. The handsy one who wasn’t deterred by stabbing?”

“That’s the one.”

“This will work!” Izuku bolted for his room, rattling the six teacups and almost spilling the one in the red, child-sized cup. He grabbed the key from his neck, thumb tracing over both USBs, and yanked open the drawer without concern.

The key didn’t burn, there was no weight to the metal, no path traced across his skin by the weight of thoughts and trembling, shaking hands (why shake when two notebooks had been dealt with, crafted into something useful, something good).

He grabbed the third, bottom-most notebook (why tremble when Aizawa thought him smart enough, when Dabi needed him to be smart enough, when Nezu and Tsukauchi and Toga had decided he was smart enough).

Izuku grabbed Endeavour’s notebook. He grabbed the preserved pages with its writing in different pens and colours and styles. He grabbed

the statistics and charts and notices folded inside.

Izuku smiled as ideas whirled through his mind and were held tight in his hands. (The smile was Aizawa-sensei's, bone-bleached edges sharp and creeping.)

Plan R: Redemption

Chapter Summary

> There are some explanations, some introductions, and many Plans.

Chapter Notes

> Almost there! One chapter after this, though it kind of snuck up on me. Hope you like some banter and some devious plotting.

Everything escalated with a notebook.

Shouta wasn't surprised by this, exactly. So much of his life seemed to come back to messy words scrawled across cheap paper (or not so cheap, because his student deserved nice things and cat-themed notebooks were almost as adorable as said student).

Still, as Izuku came barreling back into the room without his bag but clutching two blue folders and the most pristine notebook Shouta had ever seen in Izuku's collection, Shouta just knew things were going to get interesting.

Though how they were going to get more interesting than an emaciated Number One hero sitting on the couch of a woman who was one of the most effective interrogators Shouta had ever seen, well, Shouta couldn't begin to guess.

Plus Ultra may as well be the Midoriya motto.

Shouta hooked his arm out, catching his student in the chest, and shuffled the boy into a chair. Chairs made looming much more effective.

Out if the corner of his eye, Shouta caught the tensing of the older teen, Dabi, and approved. The boy hadn't been more than an arm's reach from the girl since they entered and he'd kept himself between Izuku and Yagi almost as long.

"Problem Child."

"Aizawa-sensei?" Izuku asked, not alarmed in the slightest by his sudden change in position.

“Settle. Breathe. Then talk.”

“What?”

Shouta didn’t sigh, because the kid might take that the wrong way (the kid, not his son, because he wasn’t about to take Izuku’s earlier slip-up the wrong way either, despite the warm and spiked feelings that absolutely weren’t in his gut). Instead, Shouta slowly reached forward and grabbed a bony wrist, angling Izuku’s hand so he could see the tremble but the rest of the room’s sight-lines would have been blocked by Shouta’s body.

“Oh.” And the kid sounded *sad.* “I thought that had stopped.”

Shouta reached into one of the pockets in his pants and pulled out a smaller version of his capture weapon that he used as both restraints and bandages when the situation called for it. He started wrapping it around Izuku’s wrist to the boy’s soft bemusement.

The trembles didn’t stop, exactly, but they settled a bit, and Izuku leaned into the touch, his breath evening out with each loop.

“It’s energy, Problem Child. You’re going too fast again. How many plans are going through that brain of yours?”

Izuku opened his mouth but didn’t get to answer, as Toga plopped down on the floor by his knee holding two teacups that splashed just slightly. A resigned looking Dabi had followed her more slowly, settling in with a lean against the wall after skirting the room with wary eyes.

Dabi seemed to relax a bit when Shouta was between him and the rest of the room, which was interesting. Shouta didn’t usually have that effect on people unless he was between them and an actual attacker, and not always then, either.

“Tea!” Toga shoved the cup at Izuku, who had to put the folders and notebook on his lap to accept it, since Shouta hadn’t finished with his other arm yet.

Toga waited until he’d had a couple good sips before nodding and turning to her own a cup, humming just slightly.

Shouta accepted this, appreciated the help in taking care of the Problem Child, even, since Inko was running herd on her other guests (her trust, her permission was its own soothing, bracing presence).

“So. Plans?”

Izuku blinked up and started muttering about 1R, the Notebook, Endeavour, Nezu, and back up plans. Which wasn’t great, since it meant the boy didn’t know where to start or when to stop.

Shouta had quickly learned that notebooks were both meticulous records and clear evidence of Izuku’s intelligence. They were also a coping mechanism, though he wasn’t sure how much the kid realized that. They were a coping mechanism for the shitty hand he’d been dealt, a way of dealing with the abuse and focusing on something else entirely, but they were also a way for dealing with his own mind.

Shouta had seen a similar frenzy in Nezu a couple times over the years, though very rarely and almost always accidentally, when Shouta was somewhere he wasn’t supposed to be. He felt it occasionally creeping on him, too, when the thoughts were too much and he couldn’t turn off the patterns and people and the predictions.

Shouta went to Hizashi, then. Let the man feed him and babble about English songs and work gossip that Shouta really didn’t care about beyond the cadence of Hizashi’s voice and the sound drowning out Shouta’s thoughts.

Izuku didn’t have a Hizashi. He loved his mother, but tried to protect her rather more that his mother appreciated. So he used the notebooks. Used them to get out the words that were taking up too much space in his mind and trace the edges of plans and courses that were useful and could be followed up on. They were release and organization both.

Shouta finished the wrapping and switched his hold to loose pressure on his kid’s wrist. “Several plans, then, and they’re interweaving, right?” Izuku nodded around his tea while Dabi raised an eyebrow from his own watchful spot against the wall.

“Okay, which one’s first?”

Izuku tilted his head. “1R, except Endeavour needs to go first, or, in the middle, since he’d impeding 1R, sort of. And Endeavour isn’t one plan, exactly.” Izuku pulled his hand away to trail over the yellow cover of the notebook in his lap.

That wasn’t helpful, exactly, either. Though it was leading.

“Can I pick a starting point, then?” Shouta asked, and got a relieved

nod in response.

“Right. Why did you bring Dabi and Toga here? Stop that flinching. I like your friends, remember? I appreciate the fact that the scary one was ready to stab a hero’s secretary for you-“

“Wait,” Dabi interrupted. He pointed at himself. “I’m not the scary one?”

Shouta rolled his eyes which was worth it for the way Izuku giggled. “She has more knives on her than I do.”

Toga giggled and place her head against crossed arms over raised knees. “I like you too, Mr. Gloomy!”

Fuck. He was going to have to introduce her to Midnight, wasn’t he?

He gave her blond head a pat, ignoring how she tensed and then practically melted. He supposed it was a good thing that Izuku had practically destroyed all of his barriers for physical affection.

“Right. Thanks. So, I like your friends, and while I can’t welcome them to your home-“

“You can.” Izuku sat up straighter than he had all afternoon.

“It’s your home, too.” Inko said as she placed the snack plate closer to Shouta and the teens. She turned to stare at Shouta, emerald edges in her gaze. “We adopted you, remember?”

She returned to Yagi and Tsukauchi, the latter who was distracting his friend and letting the kids and Shouta have their moment. He was also holding back more laughter, if the tension on his back was to be believed.

Shouta sighed. He just couldn’t hold it in anymore. Thankfully, Izuku just grinned.

Dabi was studying Inko’s back. “So adopting strays off the street is a family thing, then.”

“Yes.” Shouta poked Izuku’s cheek to regain his attention and distract himself from the fucking heat curling around his bones and pooling in his stomach. “So. Your friends are welcome, but why are they being introduced now?” He also gave a pointed look at the two 1R folders sitting under the notebook on his student’s lap.

“Oh. Dabi and Toga want to join 1R. Or apply, at least, but they’re really good candidates! They made a couple of bad choices, don’t glare at me Dabi, I know about the job you pulled last month, but they were both abandoned by their family and and were screwed over by their quirk or society’s perception of their quirk and they’re tired and distrustful but good people who want change and would be excellent underground heroes and-“

“And the problem is what?” Shouta interrupted. “You know we trust you; my understanding is at least half the prospective students for the pilot are based on your recommendations. You wouldn’t be worried or bring them back here unless there was an issue.”

Shouta was betting this was the part that connected back to Endeavour. He was also betting that saying that out loud wasn’t the best of ideas currently. Both because he generally tried to lead Izuku through snarls without being too obvious (he was a teacher, damnit) and because Dabi had just gotten a heck of a lot more tense.

Izuku huffed, a small, angry sound Shouta wasn’t used to hearing. “The problem is Dabi’s family. If they find out, they won’t be happy.”

“I see.”

“You don’t.” Dabi said to the ceiling. “And just my father. The rest of them, they’re fine.”

“His father’s a hero.”

Shouta hissed. Yeah, that would be tricky. Doable, because Nezu and Problem Child, but tricky. He angled his head toward the rest of the room where the Number One hero, a Detective, and a Librarian were discussing the weather (as in, the likely impacts of a particularly wet season on food availability, immigration, and minor villainy).

Izuku nodded and Dabi sighed, so Shouta took the acceptance he’d be given and stood.

“Hey, Tsukauchi, we might need to kidnap another hero.”

“Tsukauchi looked up even as Inko clapped her hands together once. “Phase Three?”

“Wait, what was Phase Two? Or one? Wait, is this why I was pawned off on Yamada this morning?” Izuku leaned forward and waved both arms, Toga once again in possession of his tea. “Not that I didn’t enjoy

that! Yamada was amazing and the Radio Station was amazing but what was Phase One?"

"The complete and utter destruction of your former school." Izuku stared at his mother, then looked between Tsukauchi and Shouta. "I-I was only with Yamada a couple of hours?"

"It was a long-term plan that came together this morning." Tsukauchi leaned back, half his weight on an amused Yagi. "I haven't had such a series of satisfying arrests in a while. I'll need to check back in at my station soon- I'm really only able to be out this long because someone mentioned the amount of overtime I've been working lately."

"Good!" Everyone looked to Toga who was still cross-legged on the floor. She grinned, teeth flashing. "That school was mean. You deserved better." She gave Izuku's knee a pat as he looked down rather helplessly at her.

"I'm not sure about the kidnapping thing though. The last hero made it pretty easy." Tsukauchi didn't look at Yagi, since Toga and Dabi weren't supposed to know he was a hero (nor were Shouta and Inko, but Shouta and Inko had been persistent, clever, and *angry;* they'd figured it out).

Shouta just shrugged. "Midnight would help. She's always wanted to punch Endeavour in the face." The last was muttered quietly enough that only the kids could hear, and the look that Dabi shot Shouta was immensely satisfying.

"Why are we kidnapping another hero?" Inko asked.

"Because Dabi's father is a hero and abusive and would get in the way of him attending 1R."

She hummed. "Can't we just kidnap Dabi then?"

Tsukauchi pinched the bridge of his nose. "This is my fault. I started this and I recognize that. Okay, first things first." He turned to the kids. "I have a lie-detector quirk. I'm not here to interrogate you, obviously, since I didn't know you were coming, but I can't turn it off. So, just a heads up."

Both Dabi and Toga looked at him for a moment, heads angled together. "Thanks. We get it." At the evident surprise of his easy acceptance, he shrugged. "Quirks are stupid and people always lie. That must suck."

Tsukauchi slumped a little. “It really really can. So, is there a better plan than kidnapping? Because again, the last hero went pretty willingly, and I would rather not discuss outright breaking the law.”

“Yes.” Izuku stood up, placing the blue folders on the chair and taking the notebook with him as he went and stood before Yagi.

The older hero straightened up, losing some of his amused wariness as he focused directly on the the boy he’d hurt (and Shouta would never have let the two of them be in the same room if he didn’t think the man sincere in his apology, but he still kinda wanted a turn with Inko’s purse).

“I accept your apology.”

Yagi blinked and Dabi sighed, but Shouta beat them to actual words. “Kid. You don’t have to.”

Tsukauchi leaned into his friend, elbows digging in, carefully, because the man was a walking injury, but firmly. “You really don’t.”

“I know.” Izuku replied. “But I do. The situation sucked and his response wasn’t entirely unreasonable. Besides,” Izuku raised his voice as a least three people drew breath to defend him, “I’m better now. Everything’s better. I like how things worked out.”

Izuku took another few steps. “But.” Yagi smiled, a little bitterly, clearly used to there being a ‘but.’ “You’re a good person and I forgive you but you owe me. And I want to collect.”

“Alright.”

Izuku was clearly a bit thrown at the easy acceptance. Truthfully, so was Shouta.

Light glanced off Yagi’s cheekbones as the hero gave a slight smile. “You’re a good person, too. I missed out on a chance to help you before. I’d like to take that chance now.”

Izuku hummed. “You might regret that. I fully plan on using you and your power.”

“Perhaps. But not more than I regret our last meeting.”

Izuku looked up to Shouta, and Shouta bit back a grin. He loved that expression. The kid’s eyes darted from the child’s tea cup, still

untouched on the tray and up to the vent in the wall and Shouta stopped repressing his expression for the instant his kid needed to read the confirmation.

Izuku threw his notebook on the table in front of Yagi, print outs, maps, statistics, and more spilling over the edge and onto the floor.

“We’re taking down Endeavour.”

“Excellent!” Nezu exclaimed, paws now around his favourite cup.

Tsukauchi gave a shriek Shouta would never let him live down, and tumbled into a flustered Yagi’s lap.

Inko was already reaching for the papers and handed Shouta an official document that was clearly a response to some information Izuku had tried to pass on as the consultant Deku. The words, Endeavour’s agency and not his own, still set Shouta’s blood to writhing. He and Inko shared a look before he barred his teeth. “We’re in.”

Like he was going to let his kid take on a giant by himself. Hizashi and Nemuri could hit the ground running if they wanted to be involved so badly (they might never forgive him if he denied them the change to nail *Endeavour)*.

Dabi sunk to the floor and let Toga pat his head. “What the actual *fuck.”*

“I love my family.” Izuku said, offering the words like an explanation, before handing the scarred teen a cookie and drawing Shouta’s and Nezu’s attention to the back half of his Notebook that had clearly been influenced by Nezu’s lessons on public perception.

(Shouta loved his family, too).

Everything ended with a phone call. There were supposed to be two, one to Hizashi and one to Nemuri. The two of them, however, had apparently decided to stay at the restaurant Izuku had left them in and spend the rest of the afternoon gossiping.

At least they could carpool.

He opened to the apartment door to meet two pairs of arched eyebrows.

“Good. About time.” Shouta dragged them both forward and into the living room where the entire crew was sprawled along with copious amounts of paper, three laptops, one battered whiteboard, and more markers and pens than Shouta suspected he’d ever seen in his life.

Izuku, with a cackling Nezu on his shoulder, turned away from the whiteboard and waved, pink marker uncapped in hand.

Hizashi waved back.

“Everyone,” Shouta started, “this is Present Mic and Midnight. Present Mic and Midnight, this is Detective Tsukauchi, his friend and All Might’s secretary, Yagi Toshinori, Midoriya Inko, Problem Child, and Problem Child’s friends, Dabi and Toga.”

The teens all looked over, but Tsukauchi and Yagi barely nodded. Tsukauchi had lost his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and was emphatically gesturing that ‘the law doesn’t work that way, you overgrown scarecrow’ to a lopsidedly grinning Yagi. Shouta felt that he was maybe starting to understand that friendship, just a bit.

Social niceties over, Shouta turned to his oldest friends. “We have discovered that Endeavour is a dead beat dad on top of being generally scummy and Problem Child has a surprising amount of evidence that generally scummy actually translates to criminal negligence. At best. We’re taking him down.”

“I would like to volunteer to punch him in the face.” Midnight immediately threw out.

Toga giggled and Dabi sighed. Shouta was definitely keeping them (and not just because they kept making Izuku smile, no, he wasn’t that sentimental.

“Please. I volunteered you for that three hours ago.”

“He did,” Inko confirmed, because she was lovely. “It’s such a pleasure to meet you both! I’m quite enjoying meeting my boys’ friends,” she continued, because she was evil.

Shouta opened his mouth but was immediately shushed by a waving tea towel. “You can protest the adoption when you can maintain a proper sleeping schedule with three meals a day.”

“Liar,” he told her.

She laughed. “Well, yes. But by the time you manage that, Izuku will have completed Stage Nine of Plan Adoption and you’ll never be free.”

Shouta’s student was nodding in the background and Shouta couldn’t quite decide whether he wanted to ask what stage they were currently at (he was at Stage Five of Plan Intern and would hate to be behind).

“I love you. So much,” Hizashi breathed.

“Aw, Zuku was right, wasn’t he?” That was a coo. Inko was cooing at his best friend. Shouta was discombobulated.

“Told you, mom!”

“So so right,” Nemuri confirmed and Shouta had lost track of the conversations and was starting to get grumpy about it.

“I’ll get you both tea. It’s a lovely jasmine blend Nezu brought the first time he came over for dinner.”

“He wasn’t actually invited,” Shouta was sure to say before Nemuri’s scowl gained words. Because he hadn’t been, though both Izuku and Inko had been thrilled regardless. “And, the point of *your* invitation are these two.”

Shouta gestured to Dabi and Toga, whom had been pulled upright by Izuku and led forward.

“One for you.” Shouta directed Izuku to place Toga in front of Nemuri. “And one for you.” Dabi stood in front of Hizashi on his own, running dark eyes over Hizashi’s braids and colourful shirt.

“Shou. You can’t just hand out kids?” Hizashi’s tone very much belied his words; he totally believed Shouta could and would.

“We don’t mind!” Toga said as she leaned forward with hands tucked behind her back. “You’re pretty.” Shouta was pretty sure that was directed to Nemuri, but bah, who knew? Zashi’s braids were kind of pretty.

“I mind.” Dabi added placidly.

“Tough.” Shouta patted the boy on the shoulder, once, as Izuku leaned into the kid’s side. “

“They’ll be joining 1R and the dorms as soon as we can get them ready and push the final approvals through the board, but they need somewhere to stay. There’s going to be a sleepover tonight,” and wow, Shouta didn’t know Izuku’s eyes could get that bright, “but that might not work out long term. Particularly if things slide in the direction of requiring official protection, and they might. So introductions and such. Get used to each other. Talk and all that shit. If you get along, you can be a viable back up plan.”

He was met with four blank stares, Izuku having apparently been the only one to expect this when Shouta had said he was calling Hizashi and Nemuri over (another reason why Izuku was his favourite).

“What? He has a destructive quirk and she’s overrun by society’s image. You two relate and I trust you. ‘Sides they need somewhere to stay and my hands are full with the Problem Child, developing a new form of education, fall out for destroying a school, and dragging the Number Two hero into the abyss. And even without the potential danger I’m sure as hell not letting the foster system get their hands on two kids with troubled pasts and ‘villainous’ quirks.”

There was a long silence that allowed Shouta plenty of time to really reflect on his words. He still agreed with them, but he also saw the trouble he’d let himself into. He confirmed said trouble when he turned around from his friends and the teens to see the rest of the room looking at him.

Well. Inko was looking at him. Izuku was looking at Nezu. Nezu was looking back at Izuku, paws pressed together. Tsukauchi had pressed his face into the couch. Yagi had apparently embraced the chaos and wasn’t quite as useless as Shouta had feared, because he was looking at the kids with a soft, *understanding* expression on his face.

Shouta took a breath, felt it move through his body and settle like a lattice of iron across his skin, and lunged for his Problem Child.

The brat danced away, already switching his marker for a pen.

“No. Absolutely not. We’re starting with reforming the educational system and escalating with ruining a rather famous hero. The foster system can be penciled in for later, no, Problem Child, *do not* reach for that notebook. I will hide all your blank ones, don’t doubt me.”

Shouta ignored Toga asking Nemuri if she’d ever stabbed someone and Hizashi complimenting Dabi’s coat. Shouta stepped around Inko offering Yagi more tea and the man’s properly honoured expression.

Izuku maintained distance by jumping over the pretending to sleep Detective and the Principal sitting on the man's back.

Shouta still caught Izuku (because Shouta was his teacher and the kid still had *lots* to learn) and the kid, breathless with laughter, ideas pouring from his lips, begged for just one page. Just a few ideas. Please Sensei.

Shouta smiled back because he couldn't help it. (The smile was Izuku's, sun-soaked edges soft and lingering.)

All Plans have Phases

Chapter Summary

> Endeavour falls. Hard. Izuku gives him an electronic push, Aizawa is petty, and Nezu is delighted.

Chapter Notes

> Ok. Here it is! The end of this story! It's a little later than intended, but my first try at ending this story didn't do it justice. I'm much happier with this version and I hope you enjoy!

Everything started with an email.

The email wasn't Izuku's. Not officially. Not in any way that could be tracked to him, digitally or otherwise.

The email was *mean.* Not cruel, but definitely mean. The first paragraph read like a complaint, full of general statements of anger and outrage and disbelief in Endeavour's right to be a hero.

The second, third, and fourth paragraphs had to be deleted before the email was ever sent. Well, the forth one was only a couple lines, but Izuku had finally caught himself explaining all the reasons *why* Endeavour was a shitty hero and repeatedly hit the backspace key. This was not the right medium for that.

The revised second, third, fourth paragraphs were frankly cathartic. They were straight up analysis and application of said analysis. Izuku could do that in his sleep. Had, on occasion. Not that he did *this* analysis while asleep. No, this analysis got one hundred percent of his focus.

Izuku started by dissecting Endeavour's quirk. He proceeded to outline the way several other quirks would effectively combat Endeavour's quirk. Then he went on to break down Endeavour's fighting style, which, while admittedly effective in straight combat, was basically different manifestations of brute force and thus susceptible to several clever strategies. And some not so clever ones, to be honest.

Izuku finished by moving on to Endeavour's position in group efforts, which were frankly abysmal. He would have left group efforts out entirely, except Izuku figured this was an excellent time to branch into

Endeavour's agency. He stopped just short of attaching a full battle plan detailing the top three ways to tear Endeavour's agency to the ground through martial force.

Honestly, the main reason he stopped short was that Aizawa-sensei hadn't gotten to battle-plans yet and Izuku had very little practical experience in a fight. He could spot holes and advantages better than many pros (so said Aizawa-sensei, Yamada, Nemuri, and Nezu-sensei at least, and they couldn't *all* be wrong), but Izuku didn't want his work to be sloppy.

For that same reason Izuku also got Aizawa-sensei to proofread the email.

Aizawa just *grinned* after reading the email, while Yamada, reading over the man's shoulder gave a low whistle (and Izuku thought it adorable how Yamada was too busy being delighted and Aizawa was too busy being comfy to notice how very deliberate Izuku's and his mother's invitations to the blond man actually were).

"I see now why you were worried about the kid becoming a villain," Yamada said.

Izuku blinked. "You were worried about me becoming a villain?"

Aizawa-sensei waved a hand, momentarily off-balancing the laptop across his legs. "More worried about the situation driving Deku to extremes, but yes."

Izuku tilted his head. "Are you still worried?"

Yamada snorted, but Aizawa didn't look up from where he actually was adjusting some of the grammar and wording of the email. "Only that you won't give me enough heads up."

Yamada and Izuku exchanged a look, marginally relieved to find the other equally confused.

"Um, Shou?" Yamada poked Aizawa in the cheek.

Aizawa sighed, but did look up. "Yes?"

"You want me to warn you if I decided to go villain?" Izuku asked. Because that sounded like a poor choice if he ever did make that decision. Not that Izuku would! Just. It would be bad planning to give one of the people with the best chances of stopping him a heads up.

Aizawa-sensei stared straight at Izuku, one eyebrow raised over deep black eyes. “Yes, Problem Child, I want at least three weeks warning. If you go villain now, I know you well enough to understand it’s either part of a Plan, under coercion, or we’re taking down Hero Society as a whole.”

He went to look down again, but stopped at Izuku’s tiny little, “We?”

“We, Problem Child. What? You think I’d let you get into that level of nonsense alone?”

The email eventually got edited, but only after a round of hugs and tears and possibly some laughing (Yamada eventually got pulled into the octopus arms, so he wasn’t laughing long).

There wasn’t an eventually after the email was sent. Endeavour’s Agency reacted immediately. Within the hour the entire building had gone on lockdown. Civilian access was restricted, public interaction was limited, and any and all heroes associated with the agency were paranoid and angry.

Which was making the public suspicious and angry.

Izuku leaned away from his laptop and took a long sip at his coffee, not even wincing at the cold bitterness that seeped over his tongue. His eyes quickly tracked back to the screen as comments kept being added to the hero forum.

He’d been doing a sweep over several forums, groups, support pages, and social media sites all morning. Endeavour and his agency were a hot topic; the changes hadn’t gone unnoticed. Some people were praising the increase in violence in his takedowns, seeing it as a crack down on trouble, but most were uncomfortable.

Taken with the increased difficulty of reporting crimes to the Agency and the increased vetting of civilians who persevered, well, things escalated. The stories popping up on all sort of hero forums didn’t help.

For example, Izuku was staring at an account of a woman who had tried to walk into the Agency and provide evidence for a case as per pre-arranged appointment, only to be told she had to stand in line for over an hour to make it though new security procedures. When she complained, she was forcibly ejected from the premises. The woman was sixty-six.

It only took Izuku a few comments and strategic re-routes here and there to spread that woman's story, among others, more effectively. Honestly, he was barely even needed. The outcry kept worsening and the ranting kept increasing mostly on it's own.

A plate was thunked down across from him and Izuku dragged his attention up to meet Dabi's gaze as he plunked down at the table Izuku had commandeered in a coffee shop just barely within sight of Endeavour Agency.

"Yo, Green Bean."

"Dabi." Izuku smiled as he watched the older boy start tearing pieces off his muffin and slowly eating it. "Your muffin is green."

"Sure is." Dabi ate another chunk.

"Dabi, why is your muffin bright green?"

"It's pistachio. Pistachio makes things green."

Izuku felt his smile grow even as he evaded a swatting hand to take a chunk for his own. He hummed at the taste. "That's really good."

"Course it is. Why else would I get it?"

Izuku let the very obvious answer lie and went in a different direction entirely. "You look good."

Because he did. Dabi still had his original long black coat, but it had been washed and patched, with a few extra pockets sewn in. Izuku couldn't see a shirt beneath the jacket, but the pants were hole-free and tucked neatly into serviceable but new combat boots. He also wore fingerless gloves that Izuku didn't imagine would hold up great to his quirk without some reinforcement, but covered up the edges of his scars on his wrists and palms quite nicely.

Dabi shifted in he seat. "Yeah. Hizashi and Nemuri took Toga and I out shopping. Toga loved it. Nemuri might have gone a bit wild."

Izuku fought back a smirk, knowing that Toga loving it was probably the key factor to the entire experience. The expression fell when he took in Dabi's fingers tapping the edge of the table and the way he wouldn't quite look at Izuku.

"It's not free, you know," Izuku said quietly.

Dabi jerked his head up and Izuku leaned over the table before continuing. “I mean, I get the sense that Nemuri probably went a little overboard and might have used her own funds, but that just seems like her personality. Otherwise, UA and the Commission are funding your keep, and they expect you to work for it. Not in like a forced-work kind of way, but in a sweat your butt off to complete the program kind of way. I can show you the breakdown of the finances later, if you want.”

Dabi blinked at him, before giving a chuckle that resembled gargled gravel and running a hand through his hair. “I don’t like charity.”

“I get waiting for the other shoe to drop and the creeping terror of owing someone something somehow.” Bullies always felt they were owed something while those in power tended to keep meticulous records of everyone else’s debts. “But it’s not charity. You pay it back.”

“Zuku-“

“You pay it back by being a hero. By graduating and helping people in turn.”

Dabi looked at Izuku, then over to the three empty coffee cups and lowly whining computer. He reached out and ran a hand through Izuku’s curls, the glove pulling roughly but still letting warmth sink into Izuku scalp.

“Okay, Green Bean. Okay.”

Izuku beamed, and Dabi shook his head while retracting his hand. “So I heard a rumour that Endeavour Agency has had a rough week. Something about a recent threat, I believe the the press conference said?”

Izuku snorted and turned back to his computer, flicking over to another site to see if anyone had managed to calm the thread down.

“You can’t believe everything you hear. Besides, *I* heard that it wasn’t a threat at all. A list of deficiencies is simply a list if no plan of action is included or follow up stated. And a list isn’t legally a threat.”

Maybe, maybe the insinuations that this list could be sent to others was a threat, but that insinuation was really only made by the lists existence in the first place. And the conclusion that Endeavour and his agency had made about the reasons such a list was created at all. It

certainly wouldn't make much sense for a list of weaknesses to be sent to owner of said weaknesses without plans for follow through.

Unless the sender wanted to sow some chaos, cause a distraction, and install the kind of paranoia that led to mistakes. Or was an independent consultant that routinely tried to help heroes improve. But really, how likely were either of those options?

A taunt and an incoming attack were surely much more plausible.

"Right. Those computer lessons treating you well, then?" Dabi asked as he eyed the laptop as one might a venomous snake.

Izuku smiled, fully knowing that there was likely a bit of Nezu bleeding into the edges of a grin he'd stolen from Aizawa-sensei. "Oh very much so."

While Izuku was still very much a baby hacker primarily dabbling on public sites that had minimal security, his Grand-sensei believed in education through example. Izuku had gotten a very thorough explanation on how the email would be untraceable, and how Nezu had ensured that no computer or account would be spared in the efforts for everyone associated with Endeavour Agency to receive the email.

"Glad you're having fun." Dabi had finished his muffin.

Izuku stared at the return of the tapping fingers of his friend.

"Are you ready for Phase Two?" Izuku asked, voice as soft as whispers written on paper.

"Nope." Dabi stood up, chair legs screeching across the floor. "Let's go anyways."

Izuku quickly packed up his back and brought his stack of cups to the front before following Dabi as he swept out the door.

The computer bag thumped into his side with each step away from the agency. It only took about ten steps for Dabi's arm to brush Izuku's three times, so Izuku linked their elbows and hung off Dabi much like Toga might.

The older teen glared at him, but the heat was all in his arm which left none for his gaze. Izuku cozied up, warmth seeping into still fingers.

He was ready (he was happy).

Everything escalated with a present. Well, several presents. Several presents to several different people. Because why mess with something that worked?

They started with flowers for Rei. All sorts of different flowers. The flowers didn't mean anything, exactly, though Dabi had gone a little red in the face when he mumbled something about picking wildflowers and destroying the occasional garden in his younger efforts to make his mom smile.

The notes were tucked in the colourful vases, sealed in waterproof bags pressed tight to the edges. It had only taken three exchanges for Dabi to take the place of Izuku as the flower delivery service.

Shouta knew that more flowers had been sent to the Todoroki residence, but Yamada and Inko had overseen that particular operation. Apparently, there had been a meeting held in one of the smaller conference rooms at the library that contained tears, thrown flowers, and some very clingy younger siblings.

The rest of the presents were left to Shouta, Izuku, and Yagi. They were all being sent Deku-style. Not completely Deku-style, as there were no fancily coloured wrapping paper or gift boxes, but that was deliberate. Shouta didn't want this connected to Deku or Izuku, not yet. Not this soon.

Instead, there were plain boxes with appropriate labels. They would look at home in any agency evidence or mail room. Which was the point. Shouta, Izuku, and Yagi had chosen their targets carefully, had chosen agencies and heroes that were good and solid and in the business for the right reasons. Still, it was one thing to open a box for evidence on a crime, and another to open a box for evidence on the Number Two Hero's crimes.

And there were a lot of crimes. Even ignoring the child-abuse and neglect side of things, which Shouta had no intention of doing, there were a lot of crimes. Excessive force and negligence were the most frequent. Nezu had called Shouta to come grab Izuku for a break after a lesson on data-aggregation where they'd spent the day mapping and charting the physical and structural damages of Endeavour's fights

(the break involved ice cream, the lesson after the ice cream involved fitting those maps and charts into the Outrage the Public Using Social Media Phase).

The heroes got summaries of cases they'd been on (or been running), only to have Endeavour sweep in an take care of things. The heroes got testimonies of former villains (the kids, the poor, the ones from Izuku's notebooks) that were written from prison, or hospitals, or long-term care. The heroes got recordings (obtained in mysterious and not at all dubious ways) of Endeavour Agency admitting to seeing a fault in a building yet charging in always.

Yagi was invaluable for the Hero Presents Phase, as much as Shouta would never admit it.

Not so much on the target-chasing side of things; the full depth of Endeavour's cruelty had shaken the man more than Shouta expected. The suggestions Yagi put forth were few but solid, and even included several retired heroes with more influence than Shouta would have guessed.

Yagi had turned in his paper of potential names to Shouta when Izuku was asleep leaning against Shotua's knee, the papers resting on the kid's stomach rising and falling with each of the kid's breaths.

"It's not much, I know," Yagi had said with bruised eyes and the slightest tremble to skeletal hands. "But I'm certain of them on a personal level. They won't let Endeavour's name slow them down."

There had been two things Shouta could have said to that. He went with, "Personal level?"

The bruises shifted as Yagi met Shouta's eye, and though there was no steam or increased musculature, Shouta felt the weight of the Number One Hero pressing down on them. "I never liked Endeavour. Not from he start. He was too loud, too angry, too competitive. I never felt he wanted to be a hero for the right reasons."

Yagi gave a shrug of sharp shoulder blades and sharper expectations. Shouta had never wanted to see the Number One Hero move with the thin angles of a scarecrow on puppet strings.

"I am, however," Yagi continued, "smart enough to know that not all heroes are like me, that not all heroes have the same reasons. I trusted him, Eraserhead, as a professional hero. Endeavour was my colleague and I trusted him even as I didn't like him. This is not an excuse, as I

seem to be saying far too often lately, but the kind of cruelty Endeavour practices, with it's creeping edges and public face, is the kind I'm least equipped to handle."

Yagi shook his head, long hair falling in front of his face, before turning to look at Izuku. Yagi sighed so deep he rattled. "I should have noticed. I should have looked deeper. I would have tried to stop him, if I'd seen."

Shouta believed him. Shouta had always hated the Number One Hero and the Symbol of Peace. Had always seen the many ways that could come crashing down in a resounding fall of pride and vulnerability. But.

All Might was a good hero, for all his faults. A hero with integrity. A hero with expectations and a role and a place.

Shouta sighed, in turn, hand ghosting up to rest on Izuku's curls.

"You would have failed."

Yagi blinked slowly before raising his head to once again meet Shouta's eyes. "Yes. I would have."

He would have. All Might, for all his sidekicks and Agency workers and team-ups, worked alone.

Which was fucking hard, Shouta knew from experience.

It wasn't an apology. It wasn't an apology and Shouta wasn't any more inclined to leave Izuku and Yagi alone for long periods of time.

Shouta was smart enough, with the new evidence of the last few weeks, to re-evaluate. To admit he hadn't seen the man behind the hero, hadn't necessarily expected the man behind the hero to understand his own limitations, to have knowingly cast himself into the role, fully understanding not only the weight he'd have to bear, but also the cracks he'd likely never fully see.

Shouta still didn't like the Number One Hero, but he could probably like Yagi, if the man continued to acknowledge his faults and didn't put his head back up his ass.

He could also trust Yagi (again, not with Izuku, that would be earned, monitored, and granted only by unanimous vote consisting of him, Inko, and Tsukauchi), if the last few weeks were anything to go by.

Yagi was taking to the Plan with a viscous intelligence and cheerful mischief.

The former probably shouldn't surprise Shouta; you don't survive as the Number One Hero by brawn alone. The latter probably shouldn't please Shouta as much as it did. Hizashi had tried to leave the room once when he'd walked in only to find Shouta grinning, Izuku cackling, and Yagi smiling serenely. Tsukauchi had shoved Hizashi back in with a sharp push to the shoulder blades, muttering something about not being left alone.

Yagi also had a memory tighter than any prison Shouta had ever visited. He might not want to state his opinion about other heroes, but Yagi was happy to rattle off the complete story of their various take downs and interactions at hero functions. Which was honestly quite helpful, when Izuku and Shouta were on the fence about someone or facing the wall created by Shouta's complete lack of interest in hero politics.

There was also the strategic advantage. Presents had to be *delivered*. While Izuku's Network (and honestly, what the fuck, the kid's Network was large and functional and Shouta was so proud of the brat) was really quite useful, they also had to bring in some heroes with higher clearance or access levels. Since they were avoiding Deku's usual habit of trees and the like.

Shouta was happy to use his Underground Coalition. Really, the people he worked with weren't actually surprised to be handed a box, told not to open it, and leave it without being noticed. Ms. Joke hadn't even laughed at him, just asked if it was training or a mission.

Izuku had a couple of contacts as Deku, too. A young hero named Bubble Girl was particularly eager after learning they were trying to take down a corrupt hero. Apparently she'd had some bad experiences, and Izuku seemed quite happy to have another friend to text.

Yagi as All Might had visited a truly excessive number of agencies. The memory thing came into particular advantage, here. He'd once overheard Izuku and Shouta debating on bringing in Nezu for getting into Best Jeanists's agency, since they man had truly great security.

With extreme casualness, Yagi had borrowed one of Izuku's notebooks, sketched out a remarkably complete floor plan in less than ten minutes, and added the regular meal times for the main players

and service staff. At the bemused stares of his new allies, Yagi had just shrugged. “I like to be prepared.”

At least forty percent of their presents had been delivered by Yagi, too, since the man had a built-in disguise and enjoyed walking into other places completely unrecognized with the great glee of a repressed shit-disturber.

So Shouta was maybe starting to like the man. Which was annoying, but manageable. Yagi was still afraid enough of Shouta that Shouta figured it wouldn’t even be hard to pressure the man into some child development classes. Maybe some teaching courses. (Whatever would make Shouta more inclined to leave the hero alone with Shouta’s kids.)

On the day that divorce and custody papers were sent off as the first physical present for Endeavour, Shouta came home (to Izuku’s home, not Shouta’s, no matter the fact that Izuku and Yamada had cat-napped Shouta’s two cats weeks ago) to the entire younger generation of Todoroki’s sitting around the table.

Inko was with Rei and the lawyers, the two having bonded almost instantly. They and Nezu were ensuring that the kids didn’t have to go back to Endeavour at all, helped by the fact that only Todoroki Shouto was young enough to need a legal guardian. Between the recently released Rei (and her extensive mental and physical health plan), two older siblings absolutely willing to look after their brother, and Nezu wearing his Principal of UA hat, Shouta wasn’t worried about the part of the plan’s success.

The kids however? Worried.

That worry seemed to currently be buried under a surprisingly amount of respect and bemused or vicious glee, depending on the person.

All four of the Todorokis, Toga, and Izuku, were watching the TV with great focus. Were watching Endeavour blow the fuck up, in particular. He hadn’t even gotten wind of the custody cases, Shouta didn’t think. No, he was ranting and raving on National TV about the other heroes stealing his cases. Which even the reporters normally on his side for press conferences seemed to have some trouble believing. Weren’t heroes supposed to work together to protect people, after all?

Todoroki Natsuo, head tilted and one hand clenched in Dabi's sleeve, looked up at Shouta. "You stole his cases?"

"We stole his cases." Shouta agreed. That had been Part Two of the Hero Present Phase. First give the other heroes evidence that Endeavor was crooked so they'd either investigate, refuse to to take his side, or publicly dismiss him, then give them evidence to wrap up Endeavour's case and make the man mad. Mad men made mistakes, and Endeavour had a temper.

"Solved a bunch, too. It wasn't even *hard,"* Izuku added.

Todoroki Fuyumi rubbed one of her arms absently. "He's so upset. I don't think I've ever seen him this publicly angry."

"Well," Izuku stated, rounding out his words, "We've been pushing him to the edge for a while. His agency is still expecting an attack and the other agencies are down right hostile due to all that malpractice evidence we've been shoving down their throats. And public opinion has been taking a dive so steep that he's feeling it in the merchandise and financial quarters. Now we've attacked him at what matters to him most; his competency, otherwise known as his arrogant pride in his own ability to be a hero. He needs someone to blame, and the other agencies are prime targets. They won't be for long, but he's still got some time to completely alienate them."

All eyes were on Izuku, who only smiled blithely back. "We have some time before the personal side of things comes out with the divorce and custody matters, which is also when All Might gets to publicly denounce Endeavour as a hero entirely. Any last requests?"

Todoroki Shouto looked up from his hot chocolate, fingers flexing around the mug. His voice was slightly hoarse, as if this was his first time speaking in a while. "He doesn't like water."

Izuku titled his head and let out a low hum. Shouta did the same, before grinning.

"I got this one, Zuku." He ran his hand through Izuku's curls and grabbed a handful of cookies from the plate because they were Inko's and thus delicious and he wasn't going to be sitting down for a while.

He then pulled out his phone and called Nemuri. While the phone rang he gestured to a sharply grinning Toga. "Come on, Tiny Terror, you're going to like this."

Shouta couldn't be *completely* upstaged by his own student, after all.

Shouta returned later that afternoon with a smug smile on his face and an official UA packet under one arm. A present, he might be willing to call it, though only because of his good mood.

The news was still on as he stepped into the apartment, though a moments attention had him realizing it was a recording put on loop.

The loop started much where the show from the morning had; with Endeavour ranting. Except he wasn't ranting at the screen, he was ranting under his breath at his sidekick as the two ran down the street, and the video camera just happened to have a very good microphone (Izuku had been happy to introduce some of his Network to Shouta, who'd been just as happy to outfit them with some real equipment and a paid Criminal Informant gig).

A bare minute in and the camera shifted to show a newbie hero, Mount Lady, and Midnight patrolling across the road (Mount Lady had been happy to have Midnight tag along for the chance to ask the older woman some questions and the possibility to punch Endeavour in the face).

A minute after that, and the screen caught the blurry image of a young woman in a hoodie, jumping over a bench a running in and out of frame (Toga had been happy to play bait, even before Shouta promised to be on the rooftops and ready to cancel the fuck out of Endeavour's quirk if anything went even the lightest bit wrong).

Toga ducked behind the two female heroes, hands grasping the back of Midnight's uniform even as Mount Lady gave a visible jump. Mount Lady pulled herself together very quickly, however, particularly when Endeavour and his sidekick raced up and halted less than a foot away from their faces.

The two women refused to hand over the concealed Toga to a emphatically gesturing Endeavour, which was completely fair because Toga actually hadn't done anything besides run past Endeavour at full speed while cackling maniacally. Endeavour's paranoia, shitty personality, and rough few weeks had done the rest.

Then Endeavour made a critical mistake; he called all female heroes

soft-hearted, insulted their ability to be level-headed, and disparaged their combat-readiness. He followed up his words by bullying his way past Midnight and Mount Lady to reach for Toga.

Toga, in a move that surprised no one who knew her, stabbed him in the arm in what Shouta would swear as a witness was a perfect example of fear-induced self-defence. Midnight, in a move that surprised no one who knew her, punched him in the nose so hard he stumbled a good few feet back. This wouldn't have been a problem, exactly, except Mount Lady had stuck out a rather large foot, obviously because she was off balance from Endeavour's shove, and the Number Two Hero had fallen backwards.

Had fallen backwards and down a short but steep slope into the river. While his female sidekick made a very slow motion to try and save him, before shrugging and saying 'oops' loud enough for the camera to pick up over Endeavour's yells.

The footage was then sent to every media centre in the city, and several beyond the city's borders. Toga was bought an ice cream cone for her trauma. The female sidekick had an interview at both Midnight's and Mount Lady's agencies scheduled for the next day.

Izuku was grinning wildly at Shouta as the footage began to loop again and Shouta absently wondered when a teenager being proud of him was Shouta's greatest marker of success.

Todoroki Shouto looked a little more awed than proud, though the expression quickly shifted to confusion when Shouta dropped the UA packet-present on the kid's lap.

"Here. I picked up your acceptance to UA when I dropped Midnight off at UA. You're in 1A, which is my homeroom: you're officially mine, now."

"And we look after our own!" Izuku crowed. He then sat up perfectly straight. "Wait. 1A? You're in my class! We'll be together! I've never had a friend in my class before!"

He turned to look at the youngest Todoroki, who was blank faced and clutching the still-wrapped acceptance with white-knuckled fingers.

"I mean, if you want to be? Not to presume we're friends, or-" He was cut off when a scarred hand was lowered over his face.

"Calm down Green Bean." Dabi patted Izuku's cheek as he spoke.

“Stop panicking and let baby bro deal with his own panic. Kid’s not used to the idea of friends yet.”

Izuku turned wide and watering eyes up to Dabi and Shouta could have laughed at the the growing fear on Dabi’s own face; the teen was weak to tears. Izuku’s in particular.

“I didn’t mean to make him panic!”

Dabi opened his mouth, but was cut off by Todoroki’s quiet voice. “I would like to be friends. I’m not sure how, though.”

Izuku *beamed.* “That’s okay! Dabi and Toga are my first healthy friendships! We can figure it out together.”

Dabi laughed at his brother’s slow nod. “See? It’s happy panic. Just don’t take your friendship cues from Mr. Grumpy over there.”

Shouta contemplated flipping the teen off, but figured he was the adult and that was beneath him. At least as long as his students were in the room, which actually included Dabi since Shouta was slated to give his second year ethics class to 1R first year as part of their alternative education. Damnit.

Shouta decided to just ignore the older teen and continued his path across the room to retrieve his sleeping bag from under the Midoriya’s couch. “Stashing sleeping bags at your friend’s place is perfectly acceptable behaviour.”

Izuku gasped, hand pressed to his heart in a very dramatic motion. “Friends, Aizawa-sensei? I thought we were family?”

Shouta was torn. On the one hand, Izuku had just called him family, which maybe warmed Shouta’s bones like someone had swapped his marrow for coffee. On the other hand, Izuku was only showing the slightest vulnerability and it was almost completely overshadowed by the contented mischief that shone out of deliberately wide eyes.

Sleeping bag pooling out of his arms, Shouta glared at his intern. “You’re being a manipulative little gremlin. I know you learned those eyes from Hizashi, don’t think I don’t. I will not cave.”

Shouta caved.

Shouta woke up several hours later, sprawled on top of the couch in a darkened room with the TV playing the end credits to an All Might

movie. There was a cat on his stomach and he could hear the soft voices of Dabi and his brother from where they sat at the floor by the other end of the couch over the quiet music. Dabi's arm was raised along the seat of the couch so he could drape it along his brother's shoulders, which also tucked Dabi's arm against Shouta's shin in a warm line.

Izuku was tucked against the arm of the couch, deeply asleep with one hand still in Shouta's hair, a warm presence in the many tiny braids the hero could feel tugging gently at his scalp.

Shouta closed his eyes and buried his face into one of the blankets Inko had draped over them all.

Yeah. It was a happy panic.

Everything ended with an essay.

Izuku was very proud of his essay. So was Aizawa. Nezu had rarely seen Aizawa so proud of anything.

Aizawa had read it once, read most of it aloud to Nezu even though Nezu had been emailed in his own copy, and then retrieved his phone so he could send copies to Hizashi and Nemuri. It had taken very little prompting to get Shouta to take a night off in order to bring his intern out for dinner, dessert, and a tour of the best hidden support item workshops in the city.

Nezu was also proud of Izuku's essay. The words were beautifully crafted and the arguments backed up and cited and presented neatly in attached appendices of graphs, statistics, and commentary.

The public had latched onto the essay with the desperation of people who'd been wronged and betrayed. They shared and commented and tossed parts of the essay back and forth, working each other into a fervour of anger and angst and justice.

The media had focused on the essay with the greed of people trying to monetize a crashing train or sinking ship. They knew Endeavour was going down and wanted to take their pieces as he went. The essay was a summary, a starting point, a treat large enough that there were enough angles to go around.

The hero community had flitted about the essay with the discomfort of people who'd been poisoned and tainted. Endeavour had been one of their own, and while many were happy to have concrete reasons to hold against a hero they'd already disliked, many more hadn't seen it coming at all. The smart heroes, the cautious ones, also turned a eye towards evaluating their own operations.

Izuku hadn't seen that last particular result coming, Nezu was sure, though Shouta had. It was more a function of self-esteem that Izuku didn't quite see that his work would impact the rest of the heroes, that there would be a wide-scale clean up process. Sure, some of the process would include attempts at burying evidence of wrong-doing, but that could be monitored.

And the results of the Essay and Summary Phase were Izuku's work. Nezu and Shouta had provided some extra resources, checked some calculations, passed along a few observations. The essay, though, Deku's essay, had been the boy's own analysis collated his own way.

Nezu and Shouta had both insisted that Izuku sign the essay as Deku, as the consultant who already had a name in the hero community. They told him it would lend credibility, which it would. They didn't tell him it would build *his* credibility, which it absolutely would.

Shouta and Nezu agreed that Izuku needed a name and a reputation and that the kid had already set the blocks up for that beautifully, even if Izuku didn't quite see that part of the picture with the correct scope. Even if Izuku was having a hard time making the mental jump from being perceived as a consultant to that of a *hero*.

Consulting was the start. Interning was the jumping point. 1R was the base. Endeavour was the point of no return.

These were Izuku's *accomplishments*. Things that the boy deserved to take credit for creating. Things that Nezu, Shouta, Hizashi, Nemuri, Tsukauchi, Ectoplasm, Hound Dog, and many others could, when the time was right, point out with pride and say look what work this hero *has already done.*

And it was his work, for all that he had help (was learning to ask for help).

Izuku had been clear about how he wanted this most recent accomplishment to go. Clear about wanting every bit of evidence to be true and real. There had been acres of un-fellable forests in his eyes when Izuku had told Nezu that this take down would be honest, that

he wanted to learn the tricks and manipulations that might one day be needed to take down a villain or another corrupt hero, but this one had left them enough that it would be a shame to be anything else.

Nezu hadn't even offered those lessons, yet. Shouta had picked very well indeed.

Nezu complied with the boy's wished easily, definitely plotting those lessons for a later date, but happy to let his Grand-student lead this attack. Nezu's own folder on Endeavour hadn't been nearly as comprehensive as it should have been, regardless, considering Endeavour had been one of his students, once upon a time.

Nezu understood, as very few could, that he couldn't control everything, that there were always failures, but that didn't make them less aggravating. His new Grand-student was a balm, though, a balm of cleverness, intelligence, and warm tea.

And excellent timing.

Shouta was aware of Nezu's plans for the Commission, for weeding out the corrupt and the lazy there, but perhaps it was time fill the man in with greater detail. Endeavour's fall and 1R provided several unforeseen opportunities in the grand schemed of things, after all.

Izuku wasn't quite ready for that level of political danger and Nezu wouldn't take the choice of whether to bring the boy into the Commission situation away from Shouta, but there were still elements where either of their contribution would be welcome.

All Might might be a good starting place. The extent of that man's current involvement was quite the surprise to Nezu and one that boded well for the coming year, particularly considering the search for All Might's successor and the hero coming to teach at UA. Maybe Nezu could get Yagi to shadow Shouta a bit. Surely that wouldn't end in bloodshed if they were already used to working together?

Izuku would surely keep them both in line.

Nezu looked over to where Aizawa and Izuku were crashed out on the couch of his office. The purple, soft couch that still looked like new because almost no one ever dared to sit on it.

They were playing chess on Nezu's board, keeping Nezu company as he waited for the call from the Commission stating that Endeavour had been removed from Japan's hero line up, and might Nezu want to

comment or record an official statement of support on behalf of UA? Or the one from the police stating that Endeavour was facing official charges, and might Nezu have any information to offer or possibly want to consult?

Nezu paused in his paperwork at the sound of Shouta's soft laugh. That was a sound Nezu heard rarely. A sound he'd once wondered if he would ever hear, when a scraggly, bitter teen was sitting in his office after waging a remarkably effective war of attrition against half of the hero class in his year with nothing but a handful of untraceable pranks and in-class exercises.

Of course, Nezu could have proven the culprit, but he was rather more impressed with the results of that war. He might have thought the results an accidental result, as most of Nezu's colleagues at the time had believed, except Nezu had seen Aizawa's expression.

Nezu had watched, unfortunately through a camera lens, the barest flicker of *rage* when classmates had called Aizawa a villain for his quirk and Yamada a liability. Nezu had watched, closely and in person, the faintest trace of *satisfaction* when Aizawa sat through the class lecture on quirkism, discrimination, and UA's zero-tolerance policy.

Nezu had take the quirkiest behaviour revealed in *his own school* rather seriously. A factor that the teenaged Shouta has absolutely predicted and utilized, since the evidence had been carefully left for Nezu himself, instead of being submitted though the usual procedures. Considering the several of the expulsions had been higher level students part of said reporting procedure and at least three staff members had also been terminated, Nezu thought this a sound precaution. He'd clearly been too focused on outside plans and needed to refocus inward.

It had taken weeks for the young Shouta to realize (or maybe simply to trust) that he wasn't in trouble. It had taken months for Shouta to grin, fanged and bright in Nezu's presence. It had taken years (as well as a graduation certificate and a demand for weekly teas) for Shouta to laugh, free, and gleeful, and maybe just a bit cynical.

And now Shouta had a student of his own. One of many, technically, but the only one to trust and smile and laugh with, most certainly.

Phase sixty-seven of Plan: Student was turning out quite nicely, all told (and perhaps it was something Nezu shouldn't ignore, that both

his student and his Grand-student had appeared just in time to bring light to something Nezu had missed).

Nezu placed his pen down as the phone rang. He smiled with sharp teeth and lingering eyes and neither of his humans flinched. Nezu smiled with creeping whiskers and soft paws and both his humans smiled back.

Nezu smiled as he answered the phone and was told that Endeavour had fallen, and hadn't Nezu been working on a reform class because that sounded like the most wonderful, wholesome idea to present to the media and the public.

Nezu smiled because he did so love it when plans came together, particularly plans made with those with whom he could trust and smile and laugh.

Nezu smiled because he was happy.

(There were more plans to make).

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